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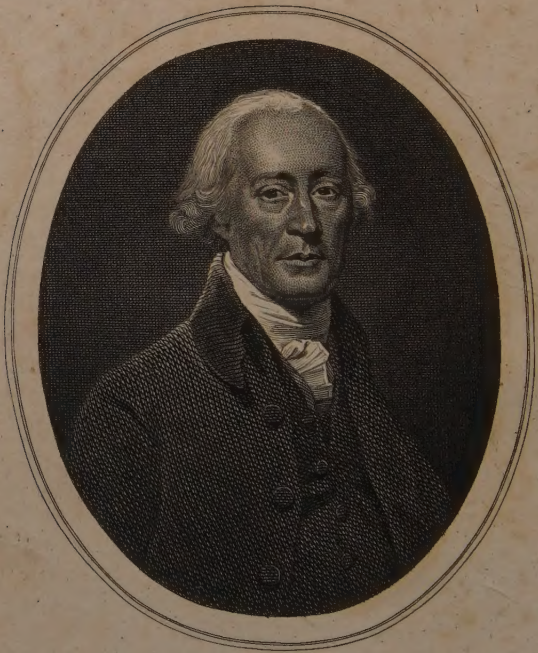

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HENRY MACKENZIE ESQ.

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THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

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WITH

PREFACES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

BY

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, A.M.

VOL. XXXV.

LONDON:

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MIRROR.

N° 1.——36.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE concluding Paper of this Work contains a very genuine account of the origin of the MIRROR, of which the LOUNGER was a continuation. The Members of that Society in *Edinburgh*, in which such a Publication was first thought of, and by which the MIRROR and LOUNGER were afterwards carried on, were Mr. *R. Cullen*, Mr. *M'Leod Bannatyne*, Mr. *Geo. Ogilvy*, Mr. *Alex. Abercromby*, and Mr. *W. Craig*, Advocates, (the two last of whom have been ſince appointed Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland,) Mr. *Geo. Home*, one of the principal Clerks of that Court, and Mr. *H. Mackenzie* of the Exchequer at Edinburgh. Of these Mr. Ogilvy, though with abilities and Genius abundantly capable of the Taſk, never contributed to the MIRROR, and the Society had to lament his death before the appearance of their second publication. None of its Members, Mr. Mackenzie excepted, whose name is sufficiently known as an author, had ever before been concerned in any Publication. To Mr. Mackenzie, therefore, was entrusted the conducting of the work, and he alone had any communication with the Editor, to whom the other Members of the Society were altogether unknown. Secrecy was an object of much importance

to a work of this sort; and during the publication of both these performances it was singularly well attained.

At their first appearance in Numbers, the Papers had no marks affixed to them; on their publication in Volumes, those written by any Member of the Society were distinguished by ſome of the Letters of a Syllable appropriated to him. The Papers, or Parts of Papers, contributed by Correspondents, had no distinguishing mark. In this Edition it has been thought proper to furniſh the Reader with the following Table, (and a ſimilar one is annexed to the LOUNGER,) by which he is informed of the Author of every Number, except the few which were furnished by Correspondents neither known at the time, nor ever afterwards diſcovered, and who chuse still to remain unknown to the Public.

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THE

THE

MIRROR.

Nº 1. SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1779.

Quis novus hic hospes?

VIRG.

WHEN a stranger is introduced into a numerous company, he is scarcely seated before every body present begins to form some notion of his character. The gay, the sprightly, and the inconsiderate, judge of him by the cut of his coat, the fashion of his periwig, and the ease or awkwardness of his bow. The cautious citizen, and the proud country-gentleman, value him according to the opinion they chance to adopt, the one, of the extent of his rent-roll, the other, of the length of his pedigree; and all estimate his merit, in proportion as he seems to possess, or to want those qualities for which themselves wish to be admired. If, in the course of conversation, they chance to discover that he is in use to make one in the polite circles of the metropolis; that he is familiar with the great, and sometimes closeted with the minister; whatever contempt or indifference they may at first have shewn, or felt themselves disposed to shew, they at once give up their own judgment; every one pays a compliment to his own sagacity, by assuming the merit of having discovered that this

stranger had the air of a man of fashion; and all vie in their attention and civility, in hopes of establishing a more intimate acquaintance.

An anonymous periodical writer, when he firſt gives his works to the public, is pretty much in the situation of the stranger. If he endeavour to amuse the young and the lively, by the ſprightliness of his wit, or the sallies of his imagination, the grave and the serious throw aside his works as trifling and contemptible. The reader of romance and sentiment finds no pleasure but in some eventful story, suited to his taste and disposition; while with him who aims at instruction in politics, religion, or morality, nothing is reliſhed that has not a relation to the object he pursues. But no sooner is the Public informed that this unknown Author has already figured in the world as a poet, historian, or essayist; that his writings are read and admired by the Shaftesburies, the Addisons, and the Chesterfields of the age; than beauties are discovered in every line; he is extolled as a man of universal talents, who can laugh with the merry, and be serious with the grave; who, at one time, can animate his reader with the glowing sentiments of virtue and compassion, and at another, carry him through the calm disquisitions of science and philosophy.

Nor is the world to be blamed for this general mode of judging. Before an individual can form an opinion for himself, he is under a necessity of reading with attention, of examining whether the style and manner of the author be suited to his subject, if his thoughts and images be natural, his observations just, his arguments conclusive, and though all this may be done with moderate talents, and without any extraordinary share of what is commonly called learning; yet it is a much more compendious method, and saves much time, and labour, and re-

flection, to follow the crowd, and to re-echo the opinions of the critics.

There is, however, one subject, on which every man thinks himself qualified to decide, namely, the representation of his own character, of the characters of those around him, and of the age in which he lives; and as I propose, in the following papers, "to hold, as it were, the MIRROR up to Nature, "to shew Virtue her own features, Vice her own "image, and the very age and body of the Time "his form and pressure," my readers will judge for themselves, independent of names and authority, whether the picture be a just one. This is a field, which, however extensively and judiciously cultivated by my predecessors, may still produce something new. The follies, the fashions, and the vices of mankind, are in constant fluctuation; and these, in their turn, bring to light new virtues, or modifications of virtues, which formerly lay hid in the human soul, for want of opportunities to exert them. Time alone can shew whether I be qualified for the task I have undertaken. No man, without a trial, can judge of his ability to please the Public; and prudence forbids him to trust the applauses of partial friendship.

It may be proper, however, without meaning to anticipate the opinion of the reader, to give him some of the outlines of my past life and education.

I am the only son of a gentleman of moderate fortune. My parents died when I was an infant, leaving me under the guardianship of an eminent counsellor, who came annually to visit an estate he had in the neighbourhood of my father's, and of the clergyman of the parish, both of them men of distinguished probity and honour. They took particular care of my education, intending me for one of the learned professions. At the age of twenty I had completed

my studies, and was preparing to enter upon the theatre of the world, when the death of a distant relation in the metropolis left me possessed of a handsome fortune. I soon after set out on the tour of Europe; and having passed five years in visiting the different courts on the continent, and examining the manners, with, at least, as much attention as the pictures and buildings of the kingdoms through which I passed, I returned to my native country; where a misfortune of the tenderest kind threw me, for some time, into retirement.

By the assiduities of some friends, who have promised to assist me in the present publication, I was prevented from falling a sacrifice to that languid inactivity which a depression of spirits never fails to produce. Without seeming to do so, they engaged me by degrees to divide my time between study and society; restoring, by that means, a relish for both. I once more took a share in the busy, and, sometimes, in the idle scenes of life. But a mind habituated to reflection, though it may seem occupied with the occurrences of the day, (a tax which politeness exacts, which every benevolent heart cheerfully pays,) will often, at the same time, be employed in endeavouring to discover the spring and motives of action, which are sometimes hid from the actors themselves; to trace the progress of character through the mazes in which it is involved by education or habit; to mark those approaches to error into which unsuspecting innocence and integrity are too apt to be led: and, in general, to investigate those passions and affections of the mind which have the chief influence on the happiness of individuals, or of society.

If the sentiments and observations to which this train of thinking will naturally give rise, can be exhibited in this paper, in such a dress and manner as

to afford *amusement*, it will, at least, be an innocent one; and, though *instruction* is, perhaps, hardly to be expected from such desultory sketches, yet their general tendency shall be, to cultivate taste, and improve the heart.

N° 2. SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1779.

No child ever heard from its nurse the story of *Jack the Giant Killer's cap of darkness*, without envying the pleasures of invisibility; and the idea of *Gyges' Ring* has made, I believe, many a grave mouth water.

This power is, in some degree, possessed by the writer of an anonymous paper. He can at least exercise it for a purpose, for which people would be most apt to use the privilege of being invisible, to wit, that of hearing what is said of himself.

A few hours after the publication of my First Number, I sallied forth with all the advantages of invisibility, to hear an account of myself and my paper. I must confess, however, that, for some time, I was mortified by hearing no such account at all; the first company I visited being dull enough to talk about last night's *Advertiser*, instead of the *Mirror*; and the second, which consisted of ladies, to whom I ventured to mention the appearance of my First Number, making a sudden digression to the price of a new-fashioned lustring, and the colour of the trimming with which it would be proper to make it up into a gown. Nor was I more fortunate in the third place, where I contrived to introduce the snb-

ject of my publication, though it was a coffee-house, where it is actually taken in for the use of the customers; a set of old gentlemen at one table, throwing it aside to talk over a bargain; and a company of young ones, at another, breaking off in the middle to decide a match at billiards.

It was not till I arrived at the place of its birth that I met with any traces of its fame. In the well-known shop of my Editor I found it the subject of conversation; though I must own that, even here, some little quackery was used for the purpose, as he had taken care to have several copies lying open on the table, besides the conspicuous appearance of the subscription-paper hung up fronting the door, with the word MIRROR a-top, printed in large capitals.

The first question I found agitated was concerning the author, that being a point within the reach of every capacity. Mr. Creech, though much importuned on this head, knew his business better than to satisfy their curiosity: so the hounds were cast off to find him, and many a different scent they hit on. First, he was *Clergyman*, then a *Professor*, then a *Player*, then a Gentleman of the Exchequer who writes *plays*, then a *Lawyer*, a *Doctor of Laws*, a *Commissioner of the Customs*, a *Baron of the Exchequer*, a *Lord of Session*, a *Peer of the Realm*. A critic, who talked much about *style*, was positive as to the *sex* of the writer, and declared it to be *female*, strengthening his conjecture by the *name* of the paper, which he said would not readily have occurred to a man. He added, that it was full of Scotticisms, which sufficiently marked it to be a *home production*.

This led to animadversions on the work itself, which were begun by an observation of my own, that it seemed, from the slight perusal I had given it, to be tolerably well written. The critic above

mentioned strenuously supported the contrary opinion, and concluded his strictures, on this particular publication, with a general remark on all modern ones, that there was no force of thought, nor beauty of composition, to be found in them.

An elderly gentleman, who said he had a guess at the Author, prognosticated, that the paper would be used as the vehicle of a system of *Scepticism*, and that he had very little doubt of seeing Mr. Hume's posthumous works introduced in it. A short squat man, with a carbuncled face, maintained, that it was designed to propagate *Methodism;* and said, he believed it to be the production of a disciple of Mr. John Wesley. A gentleman in a gold chain differed from both; and told us he had been informed, from very good authority, that the paper was intended for political purposes.

A smart-looking young man, in green, said he was sure it would be very satirical: his companion, in scarlet, was equally certain that it would be very stupid. But with this last prediction I was not much offended, when I discovered that its author had not read the First Number, but only inquired of Mr. Creech where it was published.

A plump round figure, near the fire, who had just put on his spectacles to examine the paper, closed the debate, by observing, with a grave aspect, that as the author was anonymous, it was proper to be very cautious in talking of the performance. After glancing over the pages, he said, he could have wished they had set apart a corner for intelligence from America: but, having taken off his spectacles, wiped, and put them into their case, he said, with a tone of discovery, he had found out the reason why there was nothing of that sort in the MIRROR; it was in order to save the tax upon newspapers.

Upon getting home to my lodgings, and reflec-

ting on what I had heard, I was for some time in doubt, whether I ſhould not put an end to these questions at once, by openly publishing my name and intentions to the world. But I am prevented from discovering the first by a certain bashfulness, of which even my travels have not been able to cure me; from declaring the last, by being really unable to declare them. The complexion of my paper will depend on a thousand circumstances which it is impossible to foresee. Besides these little changes, to which every one is liable from external circumstances, I must fairly acknowledge, that my mind is naturally much more various than my situation. The disposition of the author will not always correspond with the temper of a man: in the first character I may sometimes indulge a sportiveness to which I am a stranger in the latter, and escape from a train of very different thoughts, into the occasional gaiety of the MIRROR.

The general tendency of my lucubrations, however, I have signified in my First Number, in allusion to my title: I mean to shew the world what it is, and will sometimes endeavour to point out what it should be.

Somebody has compared the publisher of a periodical paper of this kind, to the owner of a stage-coach, who is obliged to run his vehicle with or without passengers. One might carry on the allusion through various points of similarity. I must confess to my customers, that the road we are to pass together is not a new one; that it has been travelled again and again, and that too in much better carriages than mine. I would only insinuate, that, though the great objects are still the same, there are certain little edifices, some beautiful, some grotesque, and some ridiculous, which people, on every side of the road, are daily building, in the prospect of which we

may find some amusement. Their fellow-passengers will sometimes be persons of high, and sometimes of low rank, as in other stage-coaches; like them too, sometimes grave, sometimes facetious; but that ladies, and men of delicacy, may not be afraid to take places, they may be assured that no scurrilous or indecent company will ever be admitted.

N° 3. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1779.

Formam quidem ipsam et faciem honesti vides, quæ, si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores excitaret sapientiæ.
CIC. DE OFFIC.

THE philosopher, and the mere man of taste, differ from each other chiefly in this, that the latter is satisfied with the pleasure he receives from objects without inquiring into the principles or causes from which that pleasure proceeds; but the philosophical inquirer, not satisfied with the effect which objects viewed by him produce, endeavours to discover the reasons why some of those objects give pleasure, and others disgust; why one composition is agreeable, and another the reverse. Hence have arisen the various systems with regard to the principles of beauty; and hence the rules, which, deduced from those principles, have been established by the critic.

In the course of these investigations, various theories have been invented to explain the different qualities, which, when assembled together, constitute *beauty*, and produce that feeling which arises in the mind from the sight of a beautiful object. Some

philosophers have said, that this feeling arises from the sight or examination of an object in which there is a proper mixture of *uniformity* and *variety*; others have thought, that, besides uniformity and variety, a number of other qualities enter into the composition of an object that is termed *beautiful*.

To engage in an examination of those different systems, or to give any opinion of my own with regard to them, would involve me in a discussion too abstruse for a paper of this kind. I shall, however, beg leave to present my reader with a quotation from a treatise, intitled, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue**. Speaking of the effect which the beauty of the human figure has upon our minds, the Author expresses himself in the following words:

'There is a further consideration, which must 'not be passed over, concerning the external beauty 'of persons, which all allow to have great power 'over human minds. Now it is some apprehended '*morality*, some natural or imagined indication of '*concomitant virtue*, which gives it this powerful 'charm above all other kinds of beauty. Let us 'consider the characters of beauty which are commonly admired in countenances, and we shall find 'them to be *sweetness*, *mildness*, *majesty*, *dignity*, *vivacity*, *humility*, *tenderness*, *good-nature*; that is, certain *airs*, *proportions*, *je ne sçai quoi's*, are natural '*indications* of such virtues, or of abilities or dispositions towards them. As we observed above of 'misery or distress appearing in countenances; so 'it is certain, almost all habitual dispositions of 'mind form the countenance, in such a manner as to 'give some *indications* to the spectator. Our violent passions are obvious, at first view, in the

* By Dr. Hutcheson.

'countenance, so that sometimes no art can conceal 'them; and smaller degrees of them give some less 'obvious turns to the face which an accurate eye 'will observe.'

What an important lesson may be drawn by my fair countrywomen from the observations contained in this passage! Nature has given to their sex beauty of external form greatly superior to that of the other: the power which this gives them over our hearts they well know, and they need no instructor how to exercise it; but whoever can give any *prescription* by which that beauty may be increased, or its decay retarded, is a useful monitor, and a benevolent friend.

Now I am inclined to think, that a *prescription* may be extracted from the unfashionable philosopher above quoted, which will be more effectual in heightening and preserving the beauty of the ladies, than all the pearl powder, or other cosmetics of the perfumer's shop. I hope I shall not be misunderstood, and I beg my fair readers may not think me so ill-bred, or so ignorant of the world, as to recommend the qualities mentioned in the above passage, on account of their having any intrinsic value. To recommend to the world to embrace *virtue for its own sake*, should be left to such antiquated fellows as the Heathen philosopher from whom I have taken the motto of this Number, or the modern philosopher I have quoted, who has borrowed much from his writings; but I would not wish to sully my paper, or to prevent its currency in the fashionable circles, by such obsolete doctrines.

Far be it from me, therefore, so much as to hint to a fine lady, that she should sometimes stay at home, or retire to the country with that dullest of all dull companions, a husband, because it is the

duty of a wife to pay attention to her spouse; that she should speak civilly to her servants, because it is agreeable to the *fitness of things*, that people under us should be well treated; that she should give up play or late hours upon Sunday, because the parson says Sunday should be devoted to *religion*. I know well that nothing is so unfashionable as for a husband and wife to be often together; that it is beneath a fine lady to give attention to domeſtic œconomy, or to demean herself so far as to consider servants to be of the same species with their mistresses; and that going to church is fit only for fools and old women. But though I do not recommend the above, or the like practices, on their own account, and in so far must differ from the philosophical gentlemen I have referred to; yet, I think, what they recommend ought to be attended to, for the good effects it may have on female beauty. Though I am aware, that every fine lady is apt, like *Lady Townly*, to faint at the very description of the pleasures of the *country*; yet she ought to be induced to spend some of her time there; even though it should be her husband's principal place of residence; because the tranquillity, and fresh air of the country, may repair some of the devastations which a winter campaign in town may may have made upon her cheeks. Though I know also, that spending Sunday like a good Chriſtian is the most tiresome and unfashionable of all things, yet, perhaps, some observance of the Sabbath, and a little regularity on that day, by going to church, and getting early to bed, may smooth those wrinkles which the late hours of the other six are apt to produce: and though œconomy, or attention to a husband's affairs, is, I allow, a mean and vulgar thing in itself; yet, possibly, it should be so far attended to as to prevent that husband's total ruin; because

duns, and the other impertinent concomitants of bankruptcy, are apt, from the trouble they occasion, to spoil a fine face before its time. In like manner, though I grant it is below a fine lady to cultivate the qualities of *sweetness*, *mildness*, *humility*, *tenderness*, or *good nature*, because she is taught that it is her duty to do so; I would, nevertheless, humbly propose to the ladies, to be good-humoured, to be mild to their domestics, nay, to be complaisant even to their husbands; because good-humour, mildness, and complaisance, are good for their faces. Attention to these qualities, I am inclined to believe, will do more for their beauty, than the finest paint the most skilfully laid on: the culture of them will give a higher lustre to their complexion, without any danger of this colouring being rubbed off, or the natural fineness of the skin being hurt by its use.

Let every lady, therefore, consider, that whenever she says or does a good-humoured thing, she adds a new beauty to her countenance; that by giving some attention to the affairs of her family, and now and then living regularly, and abstaining from the late hours of dissipation, she will keep off, somewhat longer than otherwise, the wrinkles of age; and I would hope the *prescription* I have given, may, amidst the more important cares of pleasure, appear deserving of her attention.

This prescription must, from its nature, be confined to the ladies, beauty in perfection being their prerogative. To recommend *virtue* to our *fine* gentlemen, because *vice* might hurt their shapes, or spoil their faces, may appear somewhat like irony, which on so serious a subject, I would wish to avoid. Some considerations may, however, be suggested, why even a *fine gentleman* may find his account in an occasional practice of virtue, without derogating from the dignity of that character which it costs

him so much labour to attain; and these may perhaps be the subject of a future paper.

S

N° 4. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1779.

Meliora pii docuere parentes.
HOR.

THE following letter I received from an unknown correspondent. The subject of it is so important, that I shall probably take some future opportunity of giving my sentiments on it to the Public: in the mean time I am persuaded it will afford matter of much serious consideration to many of my readers.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

AT the age of twenty-five I succeeded to an estate of 1500*l.* a year by the death of a father, by whom I was tenderly beloved, and for whose memory I still retain the most sincere regard. Not long after, I married a lady, to whom I had for some time been warmly attached. As neither of us were fond of the bustle of the world, and as we found it every day become more irksome, we took the resolution of quitting it altogether; and soon after retired to a family-seat, which has been the favourite residence of my ancestors for many successive generations.

There I passed my days in as perfect happiness as any reasonable man can expect to find in this world. My affection and esteem for my wife increased daily; and as she brought me three fine children, two boys and a girl, their prattle afforded a new fund of amusement. There were, likewise, in our neighbourhood, several families that might have adorned any society, with whom we lived on an easy, friendly footing, free from the restraints of ceremony, which, in the great world, may, perhaps, be necessary, but, in private life, are the bane of all social intercourse.

There is no state, however, entirely free from care and uneasiness. My solicitude about my children increased with their years. My boys, in particular, gave me a thousand anxious thoughts. Many plans of education were proposed for them, of which the advantages and disadvantages were so equally balanced, as to render the choice of any one a matter of no small perplexity.

Meantime the boys grew up; and the eldest, who was a year older than his brother, had entered his tenth year, when an uncle of my wife, who, by his services in parliament, and an assiduous attendance at court, had obtained a very considerable office under government, honoured us with a visit. He seemed much pleased with the looks, the spirit, and promising appearance of my sons; he paid me many compliments on the occasion, and I listened to him with all the pleasure a fond parent feels in hearing the praises of his children.

After he had been some days with us, he asked me in what manner I proposed to educate the boys, and what my views were as to their establishment in the world? I told him all my doubts and perplexities. He enlarged on the absurdity of the old-fashioned system of education, as he termed it, and talked

much of the folly of sending a boy to Eton or Westminster, to waste the most precious years of his life in acquiring languages of little or no real use in the world; and begged leave to suggest a plan, which, he said, had been attended with the greatest success in a variety of instances that had fallen within his own particular knowledge.

His scheme was to send my sons for two or three years to a private school in the neighbourhood of London, where they might get rid of their provincial dialect, which, he observed, would be alone sufficient to disappoint all hopes of their future advancement. He proposed to send them afterwards to an academy at Paris to acquire the French language, with every other accomplishment necessary to fit them for the world. 'When your eldest son,' added he, 'is thus qualified, it will be easy for me to get him appointed secretary to an embassy; and if he shall then possess those abilities of which he has now every appearance, I make no doubt I shall be able to procure him a seat in parliament; and there will be no office in the state to which he may not aspire. As to your second son, give him the same education you give his brother; and, when he is of a proper age, get him a commission in the army, and push him on in that line as fast as possible.'

Though I saw some objections to this scheme, yet, I must confess, the flattering prospect of ambition it opened, had a considerable effect upon my mind; and, as my wife, who had been taught to receive the opinions of her kinsman with the utmost deference, warmly seconded his proposal, I at length, though not without reluctance, gave my assent to it. When the day of departure came, I accompanied my boys part of the way; and, at taking leave of them, felt a pang I then endeavoured to conceal, and which I need not now attempt to describe.

I had the satisfaction to receive, from time to time, the most pleasing accounts of their progress, and after they went to Paris, I was still more and more flattered with what I heard of their improvement.

At length the wished for period of their return approached: I heard of their arrival in Britain, and that, by a certain day, we might expect to see them at home. We were all impatience: my daughter, in particular, did nothing but count the hours and minutes, and hardly shut her eyes the night preceding the day on which her brothers were expected: her mother and I, though we shewed it less, felt, I believe, equal anxiety.

When the day came, my girl, who had been constantly on the look-out, ran to tell me she saw a post-chaise driving to the gate. We hurried down to receive the boys. But, judge of my astonishment, when I saw two pale, emaciated figures get out of the carriage, in their dress and looks resembling monkies rather than human creatures. What was still worse, their manners were more displeasing than their appearance. When my daughter ran up, with tears of joy in her eyes, to embrace her brother, he held her from him, and burst into an immoderate fit of laughter at something in her dress that appeared to him ridiculous. He was joined in the laugh by his younger brother, who was pleased, however, to say, that the girl was not ill-looking, and, when taught to put on her clothes, and to use a little *rouge*, would be tolerable.

Mortified as I was at this impertinence, the partiality of a parent led me to impute it, in a great measure, to the levity of youth; and I still flattered myself that matters were not so bad as they appeared to be. In these hopes I sat down to dinner. But there the behaviour of the young gentlemen did not,

by any means, tend to lessen my chagrin: there was nothing at table they could eat; they ran out in praise of French cookery, and seemed even to be adepts in the science: they knew the component ingredients of the most fashionable *ragoos* and *fricandeaus*, and were acquainted with the names and characters of the most celebrated practitioners of the art in Paris.

To stop this inundation of absurdity, and, at the same time, to try the boys further, I introduced some topics of conversation, on which they ought to have been able to say something. But, on these subjects, they were perfectly mute; and I could plainly see their silence did not proceed from the modesty and diffidence natural to youth, but from the most perfect and profound ignorance. They soon, however, took their revenge for the restraint thus imposed on them. In their turn they began to talk of things, which, to the rest of the company, were altogether unintelligible. After some conversation, the drift of which we could not discover, they got into a keen debate on the comparative merit of the *Dos de puce*, and the *Puce en Couches*; and, in the course of their argument, used words and phrases which to us were equally incomprehensible as the subject on which they were employed. Not long after my poor girl was covered with confusion, on her brother's asking her, If she did not think the *Cuisse de la Reine* the prettiest thing in the world?

But, Sir, I should be happy, were I able to say, that ignorance and folly, bad as they are, were all I had to complain of. I am sorry to add, that my young men seem to have made an equal progress in vice. It was but the other day I happened to observe to the eldest, that it made me uneasy to see his brother look so very ill; to which he replied,

with an air of the most easy indifference, that poor *Charles* had been a little unfortunate in an affair with an Opera-girl at Paris; but, for my part, added he, I never ran those hazards, as I always confined my amours to women of fashion.

In short, Sir, these unfortunate youths have returned ignorant of every thing they ought to know; their minds corrupted, and their bodies debilitated, by a course of premature debauchery. I can easily see that I do not possess either their confidence or affection; and they even seem to despise me for the want of those frivolous accomplishments on which they value themselves so highly. In this situation, what is to be done? Their vanity and conceit make them incapable of listening to reason or advice; and to use the authority of a parent, would probably be as ineffectual for their improvement, as to me it would be unpleasant.

I have thus, Sir, laid my case before you, in hopes of being favoured with your sentiments upon it. Possibly it may be of some benefit to the public, by serving as a beacon to others in similar circumstances. As to myself, I hardly expect you will be able to point out a remedy for that affliction which preys upon the mind, and, in all likelihood, will shorten the days, of

Your unfortunate humble servant,

R L. G.

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

VITREUS'S *favours have been received, and shall be duly attended to.*

A Letter signed A. Z. *and an Essay subscribed* D. *are under consideration.*

On Wednesday next (Tuesday being appointed for the day of the National Fast) will be published N° 5.

N° 5. WEDNESDAY, FEB. 10, 1779.

PEDANTRY, in the common sense of the word, means an absurd ostentation of learning and stiffness of phraseology, proceeding from a misguided knowledge of books, and a total ignorance of men.

But I have often thought, that we might extend its signification a good deal farther; and, in general, apply it to that failing, which disposes a person to obtrude upon others subjects of conversation relating to his own business, studies, or amusement.

In this sense of the phrase, we should find *pedants* in every character and condition of life. Instead of a black coat and plain shirt, we should often see pedantry appear in an embroidered suit and Brussels lace; instead of being bedaubed with snuff, we should find it breathing perfumes; and, in place of a book-worm, crawling through the gloomy cloisters of an university, we should mark it in the state of a gilded butterfly, buzzing through the gay region of the drawing-room.

Robert Daisey, Esq. is a pedant of this last kind. When he tells you that his ruffles cost twenty guineas a pair; that his buttons were the first of the kind, made by one of the most eminent artists in

Birmingham; that his buckles were procured by means of a friend at Paris, and are the exact pattern of those worn by the *Comte d'Artois*; that the loop of his hat was of his own contrivance, and has set the fashion to half a dozen of the finest fellows in town: when he descants on all these particulars, with that smile of self-complacency which sits for ever on his cheek, he is as much a pedant as his quondam tutor, who recites verses from Pindar, tells stories out of Herodotus, and talks for an hour on the energy of the Greek particles.

But Mr. Daisey is struck dumb by the approach of his brother Sir *Thomas*, whose pedantry goes a pitch higher, and pours out all the intelligence of France and Italy, whence the young Baronet is just returned, after a tour of fifteen months over all the kingdoms of the continent. Talk of music, he cuts you short with the history of the first singer at *Naples*; of painting, he runs you down with a description of the gallery at *Florence*; of architecture, he overwhelms you with the dimensions of St. *Peter's*, or the great church at *Antwerp*; or, if you leave the province of art altogether, and introduce the name of a river or hill, he instantly deluges you with the *Rhine*, or makes you dizzy with the height of *Etna* or *Mont Blanc*.

Miss will have no difficulty of owning her great aunt to be a pedant, when she talks all the time of dinner on the composition of the pudding, or the seasoning of the mince-pies; or enters into a disquisition on the figure of the damask table-cloth, with a word or two on the thrift of making one's own linen: but the young lady will be surprised when I inform her, that her own history of last Thursday's assembly, with the episode of Lady Di's feather, and the digression to the qualities of Mr.

Frizzle the hair-dresser, was also a piece of downright pedantry.

Mrs. *Caudle* is guilty of the same weakness, when she recounts the numberless witticisms of her daughter *Emmy*, describes the droll figure her little *Bill* made yesterday at trying on his first pair of breeches, and informs us, that *Bobby* has got seven teeth, and is just cutting an eighth, though he will be but nine months old next Wednesday at six o'clock in the evening. Nor is her pedantry less disgusting, when she proceeds to enumerate the virtues and good qualities of her husband; though this last species is so uncommon, that it may, perhaps, be admitted into conversation for the sake of variety.

Muckworm is the meanest of pedants, when he tells you of the scarcity of money at present, and that he is amazed how people can afford to live as they do; that, for his part, though he has a tolerable fortune, he finds it exceedingly difficult to command cash for his occasions; that trade is so dead, and debts so ill paid at present, that he was obliged to sell some shares of bank stock to make up the price of his last purchase; and had actually countermanded a service of plate, else he should have been obliged to strike several names out of the list of his weekly pensioners; and that this apology was sustained t'other day by the noble company (giving you a list of three or four peers, and their families) who did him the honour to eat a bit of mutton with him. All this, however, is true. As is also another anecdote, which *Muckworm* forgot to mention: his first cousin dined that day with the servants, who took compassion on the lad, after he had been turned down stairs, with a refusal of twenty pounds to set him up in the trade of a shoemaker.

There is pedantry in every disquisition, however

masterly it may be, that stops the general conversation of the company. When *Silius* delivers that sort of lecture he is apt to get into, though it is supported by the most extensive information and the clearest discernment, it is still pedantry; and, while I admire the talents of *Silius*, I cannot help being uneasy at his exhibition of them. In the course of this dissertation, the farther a man proceeds, the more he seems to acquire strength and inclination for the progress. Last night, after supper, *Silius* began upon *Protestantism*, proceeded to the *Irish massacre*, went through the *Revolution*, drew the character of King *William*, repeated anecdotes of *Schomberg*, and ended at a quarter past twelve, by delineating the course of the *Boyne*, in half a bumper of port, upon my best table; which river, happening to overflow its banks, did infinite damage to my cousin Sophy's white sattin petticoat.

In short, every thing, in this sense of the word, is *Pedantry*, which tends to destroy that equality of conversation which is necessary to the perfect ease and good-humour of the company. Every one would be struck with the unpoliteness of that person's behaviour, who should help himself to a whole plate of peas or strawberries which some friend had sent him for a rarity in the beginning of the season. Now, *Conversation* is one of those good things of which our guests or companions are equally entitled to a share, as of any other constituent part of the entertainment; and it is as essential a want of politeness to engross the one, as to monopolize the other.

Besides, it unfortunately happens, that we are very inadequate judges of the value of our own discourse, or the rate at which the dispositions of our company will incline them to hold it. The reflections we make, and the stories we tell, are to be judged of by others, who may hold a very different opinion of

their acuteness or their humour. It will be prudent, therefore, to consider, that the dish we bring to this entertainment, however pleasing to our own taste, may prove but moderately palatable to those we mean to treat with it; and that, to every man, as well as ourselves, (except a few very humble ones,) his own conversation is the *plate of peas or strawberries.*

V

N° 6. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1779.

Nec excitatur classico miles truci
Nec horrit iratum mare;
Forumque vitat, et superba civium
Potentiorum limina.

HOR.

GREAT talents are usually attended with a proportional desire of exerting them; and indeed, were it otherwise, they would be, in a great measure, useless to those who possess them, as well as to society.

But, while this disposition generally leads men of high parts and high spirit to take a share in active life, by engaging in the pursuits of business or ambition, there are, amidst the variety of human character, some instances, in which persons eminently possessed of those qualities, give way to a contrary disposition.

A man of an aspiring mind and nice sensibility may, from a wrong direction, or a romantic excess of spirit, find it difficult to submit to the ordinary

pursuits of life. Filled with enthusiastic ideas of the glory of a general, a senator, or a statesman, he may look with indifference, or even with disgust, on the less brilliant, though, perhaps, not less useful, occupations of the physician, the lawyer, or the trader.

My friend Mr. *Umphraville* is a remarkable, instance of great talents thus lost to himself and to society. The singular opinions which have influenced his conduct, I have often heard him attempt, with great warmth, to defend.

'In the pursuit of an ordinary profession,' would he say, 'a man of spirit and sensibility, while 'he is subjected to disgusting occupations, finds it 'necessary to submit with patience, nay often with 'the appearance of satisfaction, to what he will be 'apt to esteem dulness, folly, or impertinence, in 'those from whose countenance, or opinion, he 'hopes to derive success; and, while he pines in 'secret at so irksome a situation, perhaps, amidst 'the crowds with whom he converses, he may not 'find a friend to whom he can communicate his 'sorrows.

'If, on the other hand,' he would add, 'he betakes himself to retirement, it is true, he cannot 'hope for an opportunity of performing splendid 'actions, or of gratifying a passion for glory; but 'if he attain not all that he wishes, he avoids much 'of what he hates. Within a certain range he will 'be master of his occupations and his company; 'his books will, in part, supply the want of society; 'and, in contemplation at least, he may often enjoy 'those pleasures from which fortune has precluded 'him.

'If the country, as will generally happen, be the 'place of his retirement, it will afford a variety of 'objects agreeable to his temper. In the prospect

'of a lofty mountain, an extensive plain, or the 'unbounded ocean, he may gratify his taste for the 'sublime; while the lonely vale, the hollow bank, 'or the shady wood, will present him a retreat 'suited to the thoughtfulness of his disposition.'

Such are the sentiments which have formed the character of Mr. *Umphraville*, which have regulated the choice and tenor of his life.

His father, a man of generosity and expence beyond his fortune, though that had once been considerable, left him at the age of twenty-five, full of the high sentiments natural, at these years, to a young gentleman brought up as the heir of an ancient family, and a large estate, with a very considerable income to support them; for though the remaining part of the family-fortune still afforded him a rent-roll of 1000l. a year, his clear revenue could scarcely be estimated at 300l.

Mr. *Umphraville*, though he wanted not a relish for polite company and elegant amusements, was more distinguished for an ardent desire of knowledge; in consequence of which he had made an uncommon progress in several branches of science. The classical writers of ancient and modern times, but especially the former, were those from whose works he felt the highest pleasure; yet he had, among other branches of learning, obtained a considerable knowledge of jurisprudence, and was a tolerable proficient in mathematics.

On these last circumstances his friends founded their hopes of his rising in the world. One part of them argued, from the progress he had made in jurisprudence, that he would prove an excellent lawyer; the other, that his turn for mathematics would be an useful qualification in a military life; and all agreed in the necessity of his following

some profession in which he might have an opportunity of repairing his fortune.

Mr. *Umphraville*, however, had very different sentiments. Though he had studied the science of jurisprudence with pleasure, and would not have declined the application of its principles, as a member of the legislature, he felt no inclination to load his memory with the rules of our muncipal law, or to occupy himself in applying them to the uninteresting disputes of individuals; and, though he neither wanted a taste for the art, nor a passion for the glory of a soldier, he was full as little disposed to carry a pair of colours at a review, or to line the streets in a procession. Nor were his objections to other plans of bettering his fortune, either at home or abroad, less unsurmountable.

In short, after deliberating on the propositions of his friends, and comparing them with his own feelings, Mr. *Umphraville* concluded, that, as he could not enter into the world in a way suited to his inclination and temper, the quiet and retirement of a country-life, though with a narrow fortune, would be more conducive to his happiness, than the pursuit of occupations to which he felt an aversion, even should they be attended with a greater degree of success than, from that circumstance, he judged to be probable.

Agreeably to this opinion he took his resolution; and, notwithstanding the opposition of his friends, retired, a few months after his father's death, to his estate in the country, where he has lived upwards of forty years; his family, since the death of his mother, a lady of uncommon sense and virtue, who survived her husband some time, having consisted only of himself, and an unmarried sister, of a disposition similar to his own.

Neither his circumstances nor inclination led Mr.

Umphraville to partake much of the jollity of his neighbours. His farm has never exceeded what he found absolutely necessary for the convenience of his little family; and though he employed himself for a few years in extending his plantations over the neighbouring grounds, even that branch of industry he soon laid aside, from a habit of indolence, which has daily grown upon him; and since it has been dropped, his books, and sometimes his gun, with the conversation of his sister, and a few friends who now and then visit him, entirely occupy his time.

In this situation, Mr. *Umphraville* has naturally contracted several peculiarities, both of manner and opinion. They are, however, of a kind which neither lessen the original politeness of the one, nor weaken the natural force and spirit of the other. In a word, though he has contracted rust, it is the rust of a great mind, which, while it throws a certain melancholy reverence around its possessor, rather enhances than detracts from the native beauty and dignity of his character.

These particulars will suffice for introducing this gentleman to my readers; and I may afterwards take occasion to gratify such of them as wish to know somewhat more of a life and opinions with which I have long been intimately acquainted.

L.

N° 7. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1779.

Indocilis privata loqui.

LUC.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

I AM a sort of retainer to the muses; and though I cannot boast of much familiarity with themselves, hold a subordinate intimacy with several branches of their family. I never made verses, but I can repeat several thousands. Though I am not a writer, I am reckoned a very ready expounder of *enigmas;* and I have given many good hints towards the composition of some favourite *rebuses* and *charades*. I have also a very competent share of classical learning; I can construe Latin when there is an English version on the opposite column, and read the Greek character with tolerable facility; I speak a little French, and can make shift to understand the subject of an Italian opera.

With these qualifications, Sir, I am held in considerable estimation by the wits of both sexes. I am sometimes allowed to clap first at a play, and pronounce a firm *encore* after a fashionable song. I am consulted by several ladies before they stick their pin into the catalogue of the *circulating library;* and have translated to some polite companies all the mottoes of your paper, except the last, which, being somewhat crabbed, I did not chuse to risk my credit by attempting. I have at last ventured to put

myself into print in the MIRROR; and send you information of a scheme I have formed for making my talents serviceable to the republic of letters.

Every one must have observed the utility of a proper selection of *names* to a play or a novel. The bare sounds of *Monimia* or *Imoinda* set a tender-hearted young lady a crying; and a letter from *Edward* to *Maria* contains a sentiment in the very title.

Were I to illustrate this by an opposite example, as schoolmasters give exercises of bad Latin, the truth of my assertion would appear in a still stronger light.

Suppose, Sir, one had a mind to write a very pathetic story of the disastrous loves of a young lady and a young gentleman, the first of whom was called *Gubbins*, and the latter *Gubblestones*, two very respectable names in some parts of our neighbour-country. The *Gubbinses*, from an ancient family-feud, had a mortal antipathy at the *Gubblestones*; this, however, did not prevent the attachment of the heir of the last to the heiress of the former: an attachment begun by acident, increased by acquaintance, and nourished by mutual excellence. But the hatred of the fathers was unconquerable; and old *Gubbins* having intercepted a letter from young *Gubblestones*, breathed the most horrid denunciations of vengeance against his daughter, if ever he should discover the smallest intercourse between her and the son of his enemy; and further, effectually to seclude any chance of an union with so hated a name, he instantly proposed a marriage between her and a young gentleman lately returned from his travels, a Mr. *Clutterbuck*, who had seen her at a ball, and was deeply smitten with her beauty. On being made acquainted with this intended match, *Gubblestones* grew almost frantic with grief and despair. Wandering round the house where his loved *Gubbins* was

confined, he chanced to meet Mr. *Clutterbuck* hastening to an interview with his destined bride. Stung with jealousy and rage, reckless of life, and regardless of the remonstrances of his rival, he drew, and attacked him with desperate fury. Both swords were sheathed at once in the breasts of the combatants. *Clutterbuck* died on the spot: his antagonist lived but to be carried to the house of his implacable enemy, and breathed his last at the feet of his mistress. The dying words of *Gubblestones*, the succeeding phrenzy and death of *Gubbins*, the relenting sorrow of their parents, with a description of the tomb in which *Gubbins*, *Gubblestones*, and *Clutterbuck*, were laid, finish the piece, and would leave on the mind of the reader the highest degree of melancholy and distress, were it not for the unfortunate sounds which compose the *names* of the actors in this eventful story; yet these names, Mr. MIRROR, are really and truly right English surnames, and have as good a title to be unfortunate as those of *Mordaunt*, *Montague*, or *Howard*.

Nor is it only in the sublime or the pathetic that a happy choice of names is essential to good writing. *Comedy* is so much beholden to this article, that I have known some with scarcely any wit or character but what was contained in the *Dramatis Personæ*. Every other species of writing, in which humour or character is to be personified, is in the same predicament, and depends for great part of its applause on the knack of hitting off a lucky allusion from the name to the person. Your brother essayists have been particularly indebted to this invention, for supplying them with a very necessary material in the construction of their papers. In the Spectator, I find, from an examination of my notes on this subject, there are 532 names of characters and corres-

pondents, 394 of which are descriptive and characteristic.

Having thus shewn the importance of the art of *name-making*, I proceed to inform you of my plan for assisting authors in this particular, and saving them that expence of time and study which the invention of names proper for different purposes must occasion.

I have, from a long course of useful and extensive reading, joined to an uncommon strength of memory, been enabled to form a kind of dictionary of names for all sorts of subjects, pathetic, sentimental, serious, satirical, or merry. For novelists, I have made a collection of the best sounding English, or English-like, French, or French-like names; I say, the best sounding, sound being the only thing necessary in that department. For comic writers, and essayists of your tribe, Sir, I have made up from the works of former authors, as well as from my own invention, a list of names, with the characters or subjects to which they allude prefixed. A learned friend has furnished me with a parcel of signatures for political, philosophical, and religious essayists in the newspapers, among which are no fewer than eighty-six compounds beginning with *philo*, which are all from four or seven syllables long, and cannot fail to have a powerful tendency towards the edification and conviction of country-readers.

For the use of serious poetry, I have a set of names, tragic, elegiac, pastoral, and legendary; for songs, satires, and epigrams, I have a parcel properly corresponding to those departments. A column is subjoined, shewing the number of feet whereof they consist, that being a requisite chiefly to be attended to, in names destined for the purposes of poetry. Some of them, indeed, are so happily contrived,

that, by means of an easy and natural contraction, they can be shortened or lengthened, (like a pocket telescope,) according to the structure of the line in which they are to be introduced; others, by the assistance of proper interjections, are ready made into smooth flowing hexameters, and will be found extremely useful, particularly to our writers of tragedy.

All these, Sir, the fruits of several years' labour and industry, I am ready to communicate for an adequate consideration, to authors, or other persons whom they may suit. Be pleased, therefore, to inform your correspondents, that, by applying to your publisher, they may be informed, in the language of Falstaffe, '*where a commodity of good names is to be bought.*' As for your own particular, Sir, I am ready to attend you *gratis*, at any time you may stand in need of my assistance; or you may write out your papers blank, and send them to me to fill up the names of the parties.

I am yours, &c.

NOMENCLATOR.

V

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor has to return thanks to numberless Correspondents for their favours lately received; he begs leave, at the same time, to acquaint them, that, as many inconveniencies would arise from a particular acknowledgment of every letter, he must henceforward be excused from making it; they may, however, rest assured of the strictest attention and impartiality in regard to their communications.—As to the insertion of papers sent him, he will be allowed to suggest, that from the nature of his

publication, the acceptance or refusal of an essay is no criterion of its merit, nor of the opinion in which it is held by the Editor. A performance may be improper for the MIRROR, *as often on account of its rising above, as of its falling below, the level of such a work, which is peculiarly circumscribed, not only in its subjects, but in the manner of treating them. The same circumstance will often render it necessary to alter or abridge the productions of correspondents; a liberty for which the Editor hopes their indulgence, and which he will use with the utmost caution.*

N° 8. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1779.

Inspicere tanquam in speculum
Vitas omnium jubeo.
TER.

IT was with regret that the Editor found himself under the necessity of abridging the following letter, communicated by an unknown correspondent.

To the EDITOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

As I was walking one afternoon, about thirty years ago, by the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, in the neighbourhood of Babelmandel, I accidentally met with a Dervise. How we forthwith commenced acquaintance; how I went with him to his hermitage; how our acquaintance improved into intimacy, and our intimacy into friendship; how we

conversed about every thing, both in heaven above, and in the earth beneath; how the Dervise fell sick, and how I, having some skill in medicine, administered to his recovery; how this strengthened his former regard by the additional tie of gratitude; how, after a space, I tired of walking by the Red Sea in the neighbourhood of Babelmandel, and fancied I should walk with more security and satisfaction by the side of *Forth;* are circumstances, that, after you shall be more interested in my life and conversation, I may venture to lay before you.

In the meanwhile, suffice it to say, that my parting with the Dervise was very tender; and that, as a memorial of his friendship, he presented me with a Mirror. I confess frankly, that, considering the poverty of my friend, and his unaffected manner of offering it, I supposed his present of little intrinsic value. Yet, looking at it, and wishing to seem as sensible of its worth as possible, 'This,' said I, 'may be a very useful Mirror. As it is of a convenient size, I may carry it in my pocket, and, if I should happen to be in a public company, it may enable me to wipe from my face any accidental dust, or to adjust the posture of my periwig. For, Sir, at that time, in order to command some respect among the Mussulmen, I wore a periwig of three tails.

'That Mirror,' said the Dervise, looking at me with great earnestness, 'is of higher value than you suppose: and of this, by the following account of its nature and uses, I am sure you will be fully satisfied. Of Mirrors, some are convex, and represent their object of a size considerably diminished: accordingly, the images they display are extremely beautiful. A company of people represented by this Mirror, shall appear without spot or blemish, like a company of lovely sylphs. Now,

'my good Christian friend, mine is not a convex 'Mirror. Neither is it concave: for concave Mir-'rors have just an opposite effect; and, by enlar-'ging the object they represent, would render even 'the *Houri* in Paradise as hideous as the Witch of 'Endor or a Pagan Fury. In short, it is a good 'plain Mirror, intended to represent things just as 'they are, but with properties and varieties not to 'be met with in common glass.'

'Whenever,' continued he, 'you entertain any 'doubt concerning the propriety of your conduct, 'or have apprehensions that your motives are not 'exactly what you conceive or wish them to be, I 'advise you forthwith to consult the Mirror. You 'will there see yourself without disguise; and be 'enabled, not merely to wipe from your face any 'accidental dust, or to adjust your periwig of three 'tails, but to rectify your conduct, and adjust your 'deportment.' In truth, Sir, I have made this experiment, according to the direction of the Dervise, so often, and with such small satisfaction to myself, that I am heartily sick of it. I have consulted my Mirror, in the act of giving alms, expecting, no doubt, to see myself charactered with the softest compassion, and, behold! I was swollen and bloated with ostentation. Glowing with indignation, as I conceived, against the vices of mankind, and their blindness to real merit, I have looked in the Mirror, and seen the redness of Anger, the flushings of disappointed Ambition. Very lately, a friend of mine read me an essay he had written; he seemed to me somewhat conscious of its merit: he expected, and was entitled to some applause; but, said I to myself, 'I will administer to no man's vanity, nor ex-'pose my friend by encouraging his self-conceit;' and so observed an obstinate unyielding silence. I

looked in the Mirror, and am ashamed to tell you my motive was not so pure.

But, instead of exposing my own infirmities, I will, in perfect consistency with some of the most powerful principles in our nature, and in a manner much less exceptionable to myself, explain the properties of my Mirror, by the views it gives me of other men.

'Whenever,' continued the Dervise, 'you 'have any doubt concerning the conduct of an- 'other person, take an opportunity, and, when 'he is least aware, catch a copy of his face 'in your Mirror.' It would do your heart good, Sir, if you delight in that species of moral criticism which some people denominate scandal, to see the discoveries I have made. Many a grave physician have I seen laying his head to one side, fixing his solemn eye on the far corner of a room, or poring with steady gaze on his watch, and seeming to count the beats of his patient's pulse, when, in fact, he was numbering, in his own mind, the guineas accruing from his circle of morning visits, or studying what fine speech he should make to my Lady Dutchess; or, if his patient were a fair patient—but here I would look no longer.

I have often carried my Mirror to church, and, sitting in a snug corner, have catched the flaming orator of the pulpit in many a rare grimace, and expressive gesture; expressive not of humility, but of pride; not of any desire to communicate instruction, but to procure applause; not to explain the gospel, but to exhibit the preacher.

'This Mirror,' said the Mussulman, continuing his valedictory speech, 'will not only display your 'acquaintance as they really are, but as they wish 'to be: and for this purpose,' shewing me the way, 'you have only to hold it in a particular position.'

From this use of the Mirror, holding it as the Dervise desired me, I confess I have received special amusement. How many persons hideously deformed have appeared most divinely beautiful; how many dull fellows have become amazingly clever; how many shrivelled cheeks have suddenly claimed a youthful bloom! Yet, I must confess, how surprising soever the confession may appear, that I have found mankind, in general, very well satisfied with their talents: and, as far as regards moral and religious improvement, I recollect very few instances of persons who wished for changes in their present condition. On the contrary, I have met with other examples; and have seen persons not a little solicitous to acquire the easy use of some fashionable impieties and immoralities. I have seen delicate females, to say nothing of dainty gentlemen, wishing to forget their catechism; striving to overcome their reluctance, and meditating, in their own minds, the utterance of some fashionable piece of raillery against religion; yet, like the Amen of Macbeth, I have often seen it stick in their throat.

'But,' continued the Dervise, 'if you hold this 'Mirror in a fit posture, it will not only shew you 'men as they *are*, or as they *wish* to be, but with the 'talents of which they reckon themselves actually 'possessed; and in that very *character* or *situation* 'which they hold most suited to their abilities.' Now this property of the Mussulman's Mirror has given me more amusement than any other. By this means I have seen a whole company undergo instantaneous and strange transformation. I have seen the unwieldy burgess changed into a slender gentleman; the deep philosopher become a man of the world; the laborious merchant converted into a fox-hunter; the mechanic's wife in the guise of a Countess; and the pert scrivener become a cropped Ensign. I have

seen those grave personages, whom you may observe daily issuing from their alleys at noon, with white wigs, black coats buttoned and inclined to grey, with a cane in one hand, and the other stationed at their side-pocket, beating the streets for political intelligence, and diving afterwards into their native lanes, or rising in a coffee-house in the full dignity of a spectacled nose ; I have seen them moving in my Mirror in the shape of statesmen, ministers at foreign courts, chancellors of England, judges, justices of the peace, or chief magistrates in electing boroughs.

Now, Sir, as you have engaged in the important business of instructing the Public, I reckon you a much fitter person than me to be possessed of this precious Mirror. By these presents, therefore, along with a paper of directions, I consign it into your hands. All that I demand of you in return, is to use this extraordinary gift in a proper and becoming manner: for, like every other excellent gift, it is liable to be misused. Therefore be circumspect ; nor let any person say of you, that you make use of a false glass, or that the reflection is not just, or that the representation is partial ; or, *lastly*, that it exhibits broken, distorted, or unnatural images. In full confidence that it will be an instrument in your hands for the most useful purposes, I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

VITREUS.

N° 9. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1779.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

SOME weeks ago I was called from my retreat in the country, where I have passed the last twenty years in the enjoyment of ease and tranquillity, by an important family concern, which made it necessary for me to come to town.

Last Thursday I was solicited by an old friend to accompany him to the *Playhouse*, to see the tragedy of *King Lear;* and, by way of inducement, he told me, the part of *Lear* was to be performed by an actor who had studied the character under the *English Roscius*, and was supposed to play it somewhat in the manner of that great master. As the theatre had been always my favourite amusement, I did not long withstand the entreaties of my friend; and when I reflected that Mr. *Garrick* was now gone to 'that undiscovered country, from whose bourn 'no traveller returns,' I felt a sort of tender desire to see even a copy of that *great original*, from whose performances I had often, in the earlier part of my life, received such exquisite pleasure.

As we understood the house was to be crowded, we went at an early hour, and seated ourselves in the middle of the *pit*, so as not only to see the play to advantage, but also to have a full view of the audience, which, I have often thought, is not the least pleasing part of a public entertainment. When the

boxes began to fill. I felt a secret satisfaction in contemplating the beauties of the present times, and amused myself with tracing in the daughters, those features which, in the mothers and grandmothers, had charmed me so often.

My friend pointed out to me, in different parts of the house, some of the reigning toasts of *our* times, but so changed, that without his assistance, I never should have been able to find them out. I looked in vain for that form, that complexion, and those numberless graces, on which I had been accustomed to gaze with admiration. But this change was not more remarkable, than the effect it had upon the beholders; and I could not help thinking the silent neglect with which those once celebrated beauties were now treated, by much too severe a punishment for that pride and haughtiness they had formerly assumed.

While I was amusing myself in this manner, I observed, that some of the *upper boxes* were filled with ladies, whose appearance soon convinced me that they were of an order of females more desirous of being distinguished for beauty than for virtue. I could not refrain from expressing some disgust at seeing those unfortunate creatures sitting thus openly mingled with women of the first rank and fashion. 'Poh!' said my friend, 'that is thought nothing of 'now-a-days; and every body seems to be of the 'same opinion with the celebrated Countess of *Dor-*'*chester*, mistress of King James II. who having 'seated herself on the same bench with a lady of 'rigid virtue, the other immediately shrunk back; 'which the Countess observing, said, with a smile, 'Don't be afraid, Madam; gallantry is not catch-'ing.'

As I was going to reprove my friend for talking

with such levity of a matter that seemed to be of so serious a nature, the curtain drew up, and the play began. It is not my design, Sir, to trouble you with any remarks on the performance; the purpose of this letter is to request of you to take some notice of a species of indecorum, that appeared altogether new to me, and which I confess, it hurt me to observe.

Before the end of the first act, a number of young men came in, and took their places in the upper boxes, amidst those unhappy females I have already mentioned. I concluded that these persons were as destitute of any pretension to birth or fashion, as they were void of decency of manners; but I was equally surprised and mortified to find, that many of them were of the first families of the kingdom. You, Sir, who have lived in the world, and seen the gradual and almost imperceptible progress of manners, will not, perhaps, be able to judge of my astonishment, when I beheld those very gentlemen quit their seats, and come down to pay their respects to the ladies in the *lower boxes*. The gross impropriety of this behaviour raised in me a degree of indignation which I could not easily restrain. I comforted myself, however, with the hopes that those unthinking youths would meet with such a reception from the women of honour, as would effectually check this indecency; but I am sorry to add, that I could not discern, either in their looks or manner, those marks of disapprobation which I had made my account with perceiving. Both the old and the young, the mothers and the daughters, seemed rather pleased when these young men of rank and fortune approached them. I am persuaded, at the same time, that were they to think but for a moment of the consequences, they would be sensible of the impropriety of their behaviour in

this particular. I must therefore intreat of you, Sir, to take the earliest opportunity of giving your sentiments on the subject.

I am, &c.

A. W.

THE complaints of my correspondent are not without reason. The boundaries between virtue and vice cannot be too religiously maintained; and every thing that tends to lessen, in any degree, the respect due to a woman of honour, ought ever to be guarded against with the utmost caution.

When I was in France, I observed a propriety of behaviour in the particular mentioned by Mr. A. W. that pleased me much. Even in that country, loose as we imagine the manners there to be, no body who wishes to perserve the character of a well-bred gentleman, is ever seen at a place of public resort, in company with those misguided fair-ones, who, however much they may be objects of pity and compassion, have forfeited all title to respect and esteem. I would recommend to our young men to follow, in this, the example of our neighbours, whom they are so ready to imitate in less laudable instances. To consider it only in this view, there is certainly no greater breach of politeness than that which has given occasion to this letter. In other respects, the consequences are truly alarming. When every distinction is removed betweeu the woman of virtue and the prostitute; when both are treated with equal attention and observance; are we to wonder if we find an alteration of the manners of the women in general, and a proportional diminution of that delicacy which forms the distinguishing characteristic of the respectable part of the sex?

These considerations will, I hope, prove sufficient to correct this abuse in our young gentlemen. As to my fair country-women, it is ever with reluctance that I am obliged to take notice of any little impropriety into which they inadvertently fall. Let them, however, reflect, that a certain delicacy of sentiment and of manners is the chief ornament of the female character, and the best and surest guardian of female honour. That once removed, there will remain less difference than perhaps they may be aware of, between them and the avowedly licentious. Let them also consider, that, as it is unquestionably in their power to form and correct the manners of the men, so they are, in some sort, accountable, not for their own conduct only, but also for that of their admirers.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

I DO not mean to *reflect*, Mr. MIRROR; for that is your business, not mine; far less do I purpose to *pun*, when I tell you, that it might save some reflections upon yourself, did you take the trouble to translate into good common *English*, those same *Latin* scraps, or mottoes, which you sometimes hang out by way of a sign-post inscription at the top of your paper. For consider, Sir, who will be tempted to enter a house of entertainment offered to the Public, when the majority can neither read nor understand the language in which the *bill of fare* is drawn and held out? I am a Scotsman of a good plain stomach, who can eat and digest any thing; yet I should like to have a guess at what was to be expected before I sit down to table. Besides, the *fair sex*, Mr. MIRROR, for whom you express so

much respect,—What shall they do? Believe me, then, Sir, by complying with this hint, you will not only please the ladies, but now and then save a blush in their company to some grown gentlemen, who have not the good fortune to be so learned as yourself. Amongst the rest, you will oblige one who has the honour to be

Your admirer and humble servant,

IGNORAMUS.

Edinburgh, Feb. 19, 1779.

Mr. *Ignoramus* (whom I take to be a wiser man than he gives himself out for) must have often observed many great personages contrive to be unintelligible in order to be respected

E

N° 10. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1779.

——— Id arbitror
Adprime in vita esse utile, ut ne quid nimis.

TER.

REFINEMENT, and *Delicacy of Taste*, are the productions of advanced society. They open to the mind of persons possessed of them a field of elegant enjoyment; but they may be pushed to a dangerous extreme. By that excess of sensibility to which they lead; by that vanity which they flatter; that idea of superiority which they nourish; they may unfit

their possessor for the common and ordinary enjoyments of life; and, by that too great niceness which they are apt to create, they may mingle somewhat of disgust and uneasiness even in the highest and finest pleasures. A person of such a mind will often miss happiness where Nature intended it should be found, and seek for it where it is not to be met with. Disgust and Chagrin will frequently be his companions, while less cultivated minds are enjoying pleasure unmixed and unalloyed.

I have ever considered my friend *Charles Fleetwood* to be a remarkable instance of such a character. Mr. *Fleetwood* has been endowed by nature with a most feeling and tender heart. Educated to no particular profession, his natural sensibility has been increased by a life of inactivity, chiefly employed in reading, and the study of the polite arts, which has given him that excess of refinement I have described above, that injures while it captivates.

Last summer I accompanied him in an excursion into the country. Our object was partly air and exercise, and partly to pay a visit to some of our friends.

Our first visit was to a college-acquaintance, remarkable for that old-fashioned hospitality which still prevails in some parts of the country, and which too often degenerates into excess. Unfortunately for us, we found with our friend a number of his jovial companions, whose object of entertainment was very different from ours. Instead of wishing to enjoy the pleasures of the country, they expressed their satisfaction at the meeting of so many old acquaintance; because they said it would add to the mirth and sociableness of the party. Accordingly, after a long, and somewhat noisy, dinner, the table was covered with bottles and glasses: the mirth of the company rose higher at every new toast; and

though their drinking did not proceed quite the length of intoxication, the convivial festivity was drawn out, with very little intermission, till it was time to go to bed. Mr. *Fleetwood*'s politeness prevented him from leaving the company; but I, who knew him, saw he was inwardly fretted at the manner in which his time was spent during a fine evening, in one of the most beautiful parts of the country. The mirth of the company, which was at least innocent, was lost upon him: their jokes hardly produced a smile; or, if they did, it was a forced one: even the good humour of those around him, instead of awakening his benevolence, and giving him a philanthropical pleasure, increased his chagrin; and the louder the company laughed, the graver did I think Mr. *Fleetwood*'s countenance became.

After having remained here two days, our time being spent pretty much in the manner I have described, we went to the house of another gentleman in the neighbourhood. A natural soberness of mind, accompanied with a habit of industry, and great attention to the management of his farm, would save us, we knew, from any thing like riot or intemperance in his family. But even here I found Mr. *Fleetwood* not a whit more at his ease than in the last house. Our landlord's ideas of politeness made made him think it would be want of respect to his guests if he did not give them constant attendance. Breakfast, therefore, was no sooner removed, than, as he wished to visit his farm, he proposed a walk: we set out accordingly; and our whole morning was spent in crossing dirty fields, leaping ditches and hedges, and hearing our landlord discourse on *drilling* and *horse-hoeing*; of *broad-cast* and *summer-fallow*; of *manuring*, *plowing*, *draining*, &c. Mr. *Fleetwood*, who had scarcely ever read a theoretical book upon *farming*, and was totally ignorant of the

practice, was teazed to death with this conversation; and returned home covered with dirt, and worn out with fatigue. After dinner, the family œconomy did not allow the least approach to a debauch; and, as our landlord had exhausted his utmost stock of knowledge and conversation in remarks upon his farm, while we were not at all desirous of repeating the entertainment of the morning, we passed a tasteless, lifeless, yawning afternoon; and, I believe, Mr. *Fleetwood* would have willingly exchanged the dulness of his present company, for the boisterous mirth of the last he had been in.

Our next visit was to a gentleman of a liberal education, and elegant manners, who, in the earlier part of his life, had been much in the polite world. Here Mr. *Fleetwood* expected to find pleasure and enjoyment sufficient to atone for the disagreeable occurrences in his two former visits; but here, too, he was disappointed. Mr. *Selby*, for that was our friend's name, had been several years married: his family increasing, he had retired to the country; and, renouncing the bustle of the world, had given himself up to domestic enjoyments: his time and attention were devoted chiefly to the care of his children. The pleasure which himself felt in humouring all their little fancies, made him forget how troublesome that indulgence might be to others. The first morning we were at his house, when Mr. *Fleetwood* came into the parlour to breakfast, all the places at table were occupied by the children; it was necessary that one of them should be displaced to make room for him; and, in the disturbance which this occasioned, a tea-cup was overturned, and scalded the finger of Mr. *Selby*'s eldest daughter, a child about seven years old, whose whimpering and complaining attracted the whole attention during breakfast. That being over, the eldest boy came forward with a book in

his hand, and Mr. *Selby* asked Mr. *Fleetwood* to hear him read his lesson: Mrs. *Selby* joined in the request, though both looked as if they were rather conferring a favour on their guest. The eldest had no sooner finished, than the youngest boy presented himself; upon which his father observed, that it would be doing injustice to *Will* not to hear him, as well as his elder brother *Jack;* and in this way was my friend obliged to spend the morning, in performing the office of a schoolmaster to the children in succession.

Mr. *Fleetwood* liked a *game* at whist, and promised himself a party in the evening free from interruption. Cards were accordingly proposed; but Mrs. *Selby* observed, that her little daughter, who still complained of her scalded finger, needed amusement as much as any of the company. In place of cards, Miss *Harriet* insisted on the *game of the goose.* Down to it we sat; and to a stranger it would have been not unamusing to see Mr. *Fleetwood,* in his sorrowful countenance, at the *royal and pleasant game of the goose,* with a child of seven years old. It is unnecessary to dwell longer on particulars. During all the time we were at Mr. *Selby*'s, the delighted parents were indulging their fondness, while Mr. *Fleetwood* was repining and fretting in secret.

Having finished our intended round of visits, we turned our course homewards, and, at the first inn on our road, were joined by one Mr. *Johnson,* with whom I was slightly acquainted. Politeness would not allow me to reject the offer of his company, especially as I knew him to be a good-natured inoffensive man. Our road lay through a *glen,* romantic and picturesque, which we reached soon after sun-set, in a mild and still evening. On each side were stupendous mountains; their height; the rude and projecting rocks, of which some of them were

composed; the gloomy caverns they seemed to contain; and the appearance of devastation, occasioned by traces of cataracts falling from their tops, presented to our view a scene truly sublime. Mr. *Fleetwood* felt an unusual elevation of spirit. His soul rose within him, and was swelled with that silent awe, so well suited to his contemplative mind. In the words of the poet, he could have said,

——— 'Welcome, kindred glooms,
'Congenial horrors, hail!'
——— 'Be these my theme,
'These that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
'And heavenly musing!'

Our silence had now continued for about a quarter of an hour; and an unusual stillness prevailed around us, interrupted only by the tread of our horses, which, returning at stated intervals, assisted by the echo of the mountains, formed a hollow sound, which increased the solemnity of the scene. Mr. *Johnson*, tiring of this silence, and not having the least comprehension of its cause, all at once, and without warning, lifted up his voice, and began the song of '*Push about the Jorum.*' Mr. *Fleetwood*'s soul was then wound up to its utmost height. At the sound of Mr. *Johnson*'s voice he started, and viewed him with a look of horror, mixed with contempt. During the rest of our journey, I could hardly prevail on my friend to be civil to him; and though he is, in every respect, a worthy and a good natured man, and though Mr. *Fleetwood* and he have often met since, the former has never been able to look upon him without disgust.

Mr. *Fleetwood*'s entertainment in this short tour has produced, in my mind, many reflections, in which I doubt not I shall be anticipated by my readers.

There are few situations in life, from which a man, who has confined his turn for enjoyment within the bounds pointed out by nature, will not receive satisfaction; but if we once transgress those bounds, and, seeking after too much refinement, indulge a false and mistaken delicacy, there is hardly a situation in which we will not be exposed to disappointment and disgust.

Had it not been for this false, this dangerous delicacy, Mr. *Fleetwood*, instead of uneasiness, would have received pleasure from every visit we made, from every incident we met with.

At the first house to which we went, it was not necessary that he should have preferred the bottle to the enjoyment of a fine evening in the country; but that not being the sentiments of the company, had he, without repining, given up his taste to theirs, instead of feeling disgust at what appeared to him coarse in their enjoyments, he would have felt pleasure at the mirth and good-humour which prevailed around him; and the very reflection, that different employments gave amusement to different men, would have afforded a lively and philanthrophical satisfaction.

It was scarcely to be expected, that the barrenness and dryness of the conversation at our second visit, could fill up, or entirely satisfy the delicate and improved mind of Mr. *Fleetwood;* but had he not laid it down almost as a rule, not to be pleased with any thing, except what suited his own idea of enjoyment, he might, and ought to have received pleasure from the sight of a worthy family, spending their time innocently, happily, and usefully; usefully, both to themselves and to their country.

It was owing to the same false sensibility, that he was so much chagrined in the family of Mr. *Selby*. The fond indulgence of the parents did, perhaps, carry their attention to their children beyond the

rules of propriety; but, had it not been for the finicalness of mind in Mr. *Fleetwood*, had he given the natural benevolence of his heart its play, he would have received a pleasure from witnessing the happiness of two virtuous parents in their rising offspring, that would have much overbalanced any uneasiness arising from the errors in their conduct.

Neither, but for this excessive refinement, would Mr. *Fleetwood* have been hurt by the behaviour of Mr. *Johnson*. Though he might not have considered him as a man of taste, he would, nevertheless, have regarded him as a good and inoffensive man; and he would have received pleasure from the reflection, that neither goodness nor happiness are confined to those minds, which are fitted for feeling and enjoying all the pleasures of nature or of art.

A

N°. 11. TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 1779.

SINCE the commencement of the late *levies*, I understand that not only *drill serjeants* have had daily access to the lobbies and parlours of many decent and peaceable houses in this metropolis, but that professors of *the noble science of defence* have been so constantly occupied in attending grown gentlemen, and ungrown officers, that the former scholars have found great difficulty in procuring masters to push with them, and have frequently been obliged to have recourse to the less edifying opposition of one another.

The purpose of the *serjeant*'s instructions, every lover of his country must approve. The last-men-

tioned art, that of *fencing*, I formerly took great delight in myself, and still account one of the healthiest of all house exercises; insomuch that when I am in the country, where I make it a rule to spend a certain part of every day in exercise of some kind, I generally take up my *foil* in rainy mornings, and push with great success against the figure of *Herod*, in a piece of old arras that was taken down from my grandmother's room, and is now pasted up on the wall of the laundry.

When those two sciences, however, go upon actual service, they are to be considered in different lights. That of the *serjeant*, as it teaches a man to stand well on his legs, to carry his body firm, and to move it alertly, is much the same as the *fencing-master*'s; but in their last stage they depart somewhat from each other; the *serjeant* proposes to qualify a man for encountering his enemy in battle, the other to fit him for meeting his companion, or friend it may be, in a duel.

My readers will, I hope, give me credit for the MIRROR being always a very *polite* paper; I am not, therefore, at all disposed to bestow on a practice so gentleman-like as duelling, those severe reprehensions, equally trite and unjust, in which some of my predecessors have indulged themselves. During my residence abroad I was made perfectly acquainted with the arguments drawn in its favour, from the influence it has on the manners of the gentleman and the honour of the soldier. It is my intention only to point out those bounds within which the most punctilious valour may be contented to restrain itself; and in this I shall be the more guarded, as I mean the present paper principally for the use of the new-raised regiments above alluded to, whose honour I dearly prize, and would preserve as scrupulously inviolate as possible. I hold such an essay peculiarly proper at this juncture, when some of them are

about to embark on long voyages, in which even good-natured people, being tacked together like man and wife, are somewhat apt to grow peevish and quarrelsome.

In the *first* place, I will make one general observation, that, at this busy time, when our country has need of men, lives are of more value to the community than at other periods. In time of peace, so many regiments are reduced, and the duties of an officer so easily performed, that if one fall, and another be hanged for killing him, there will speedily be found two proper young men ready to mount guard, and shew a good leg on the parade, in their room. But, at present, from the great increase of the establishment, there is rather a scarcity, in proportion to the demand, of men of military talents, and military figure, especially when we consider that the war is now to be carried against so genteel a people as the *French*, to whom it will be necessary to shew officers of the most soldier-like appearance and address.

This patriotic consideration will tend to relax the *etiquette* formerly established, for every officer to fight a duel within a few weeks of the date of his commission, and that, too, without the purpose of resenting any affront, or vindicating his honour from any aspersion, but merely to shew that he could fight. Now, this practice, being unnecessary at present, as preferment goes on briskly enough by the fall of officers in the course of their duty, may very properly, and without disparagement to the valour of the British army, be dispensed with; so, it is to be agreed and understood, that every officer in the new-raised regiments, whose commission bears date on or posterior to the 1st of January 1778, is, *ipso-facto*, to be held and deemed of unquestionable courage and immaculate honour.

As to the measure of affront which may justify *a*

challenge, it is to be remembered, that the officers of the above-mentioned *corps* have been obliged, in levying their respective quotas, to engage in scenes of a very particular kind; at markets, fairs, country-weddings, and city-brawls, amongst a set of men and women not remarkable for delicacy of language, or politeness of behaviour. We are not, therefore, to wonder if the smooth enamel of the gentleman has received some little injury from the collision of such coarse materials; and a certain time may fairly be allowed for unlearning the blunt manners and rough phraseology which an officer in such situations was forced to assume. Therefore the identical words which, a campaign or two hence, are to be held expiable only by blood, may, at present, be done away by an *explanation;* and those which an officer must then explain and account for at the peril of a challenge, are now to be considered as mere colloquial expletives acquired by associating with such company as frequent the places above described.

As, notwithstanding all these allowances, some duels may be expected to take place, it is proper to mention certain regulations for the conduct of the parties, in the construction of which I have paid infinitely more regard to their honour than to their safety.

In fighting with the *sword*, a *blow*, or the *lie direct*, can scarcely be expiated but by a thrust through the body; but any lesser affront may be wiped off by a wound in the *sword arm;* or, if the injury be very slight, any wound will be sufficient. In all this, it is to be noted, that the receiving of such a wound by either party constitutes a reparation for the affront; as it is a rule of justice peculiar to the *Code of duelling*, that the blood of the injured atones for the offence he has received, as well as that of the injurer for the offence he has given.

In affairs decided with *pistols*, the distance is, in

like manner, to be regulated by the nature of the injury. For those of an atrocious sort, a distance of only twenty feet, and pistols of nine, nine and a half, or ten inch barrels, are requisite; for slighter ones, the distance may be doubled, and a six or even five inch barrel will serve. Regard, moreover, is to be had to the size of the persons engaged; for every stone above eleven, the party of such weight may, with perfect honour, retire three feet.

I read, some time ago, certain addresses to the *Jockey Club*, by two gentlemen who had been engaged in an affair of honour; from which it appeared, that one of them had systematized the art of duelling to a wonderful degree. Among other things, he had brought his aim with a pistol to so much certainty, and made such improvements on the weapon, that he could lay a hundred guineas to ten on hitting, at a considerable distance, any part of his adversary's body. These arts, however, I by no means approve: they resemble, methinks, *a loaded die*, or a *packed deal;* and I am inclined to be of opinion, that a gentleman is no more obliged to fight against the first than to play against the latter. They may, in the mildest construction, be compared to the sure play of a man who can take every ball at *billiards*; and therefore, if it shall be judged that an ordinary marksman must fight with the person, possessed of them, he is, at least, intitled to *odds*, and must be allowed three shots to one of his antagonist.

I have thus, with some labour, and I hope strict honour, settled certain articles in the matter of *duelling*, for such of my readers as may have occasion for them. It is but candid, however, to own, that there have been, now and then, brilliant things done quite without the line of my directions, to wit, by not fighting at all. The Abbé ————, with whom I was disputing at Paris on this subject, concluded

his arguments against duelling with a story, which, though I did not think it much to the purpose, was a tolerable story notwithstanding. I shall give it in the very words of the Abbé.

'A countryman of yours, a Captain *Douglas*, 'was playing at *Trictrac* with a very intimate friend, 'here in this very coffee-house, amidst a circle of 'French officers who were looking on. Some dis- 'pute arising about a cast of the dice, *Douglas* said, 'in a gay thoughtless manner, 'Oh! what a story!' 'A murmur arose among the by-standers; and 'his antagonist feeling the affront, as if the *lie* 'had been given him, in the violence of his passion, 'snatched up the tables, and hit *Douglas* a blow on 'the head. The instant he had done it, the idea of 'his imprudence, and its probable consequences to 'himself and his friend, rushed upon his mind: he 'sat, stupified with shame and remorse, his eyes ri- 'vetted on the ground, regardless of what the 'other's resentment might prompt him to act. '*Douglas*, after a short pause, turned round to the 'spectators: 'You think,' said he, 'that I am now 'ready to cut the throat of that unfortunate young 'man; but I know that, at this moment, he feels 'anguish a thousand times more keen than any my 'sword could inflict.—I will embrace him – thus— 'and try to reconcile him to himself;—but I will cut 'the throat of that man among you who shall dare 'to breathe a syllable against my honour.' 'Bravo! 'Bravo!' cried an old *Chevalier de St. Louis*, who 'stood immediately behind him.—The sentiment of 'France overcame its habit, and Bravo! Bravo! 'echoed from every corner of the room. Who 'would not have cried Bravo! Would not you, 'Sir?' 'Doubtless.' 'On other occasions, then, 'be governed by the same principle.' 'Why, to

'be sure, it were often better not to fight—if one 'had but the *courage* not to fight.'

I

N° 12. SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1779.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

I AM a plain country-gentleman, with a small fortune and a large family. My boys, all except the youngest, I have contrived to set out into the world in tolerably promising situations. My two eldest girls are married; one to a clergyman, with a very comfortable living, and a respectable character; the other to a neighbour of my own, who farms most of his own estate, and is supposed to know country-business as well as any man in this part of the kingdom. I have four other girls at home, whom I wish to make fit wives for men of equal rank with their brothers-in-law.

About three months ago, a great lady in our neighbourhood (at least as neighbourhood is reckoned in our quarter) happened to meet the two eldest of my unmarried daughters at the house of a gentleman, a distant relation of mine, and, as well as myself, a freeholder in our county. The girls are tolerably handsome, and I have endeavoured to make them understand the common rules of good-breeding. My Lady ——— ran out to my kinsman, who happens to have no children of his own, in praise of their beauty and politeness, and, at parting, gave them a most pressing invitation to come

and spend a week with her during the approaching Christmas holidays. On my daughters' return from their kinsman's, I was not altogether pleased at hearing of this invitation; nor was I more satisfied with the very frequent quotations of my Lady ——— 's sayings and sentiments, and the descriptions of the beauty of her complexion, the elegance of her dress, and the grandeur of her equipage. I opposed, therefore, their design of paying this Christmas visit pretty warmly. Upon this, the honour done them by the invitation, the advantages to be derived from an acquaintance with the great Lady, and the benefit that might accrue to my family from the influence of her Lord, were immediately rung in my ears, not only by my daughters, but also by their mother, whom they had already gained over to their side; and I must own to you, Mr. MIRROR, though I would not have you think me hen-peck'd, that my wife, somehow or other, contrives to carry most points in our family; so my opposition was over-ruled; and to ——— the girls went; but not before they had made a journey to the metropolis of our country, and brought back a portmanteau full of neceſſaries, to qualify them for appearing decently, as my wife said, in the company they should meet there.

In about a month, for their visit was drawn out to that length, my daughters returned. But had you seen, MR. MIRROR, what an alteration that month had made on them! Inſtead of the roſy complexions, and sparkling eyes, they had carried with them, they brought back cheeks as white as a curd, and eyes as dead as the beads in the face of a baby.

I could not help expressing my surprise at the sight; but the younger of the two ladies immediately cut me short, by telling me that their complexion was the only one worn at ———.

And no wonder, Sir, it should, from the descrip-

tion which my daughter sometimes gives us of the life people lead there. Instead of rising at seven, breakfasting at nine, dining at three, supping at eight, and getting to bed by ten, as was their custom at home, my girls lay till twelve, breakfasted at one, dined at six, supped at eleven, and were never in bed till three in the morning. Their shapes had undergone as much alteration as their faces. From their bosoms, (*necks* they called them), which were squeezed up to their throats, their waists tapered down to a very extraordinary smallness; they resembled the upper half of an *hour-glass*. At this, also, I marvelled; but it was the only shape worn at ————. Next day, at dinner, after a long morning preparation, they appeared with heads of such a size, that my little parlour was not of height enough to let them stand upright in it. This was the most striking metamorphosis of all. Their mother stared; I ejaculated; my other children burst out a-laughing: the answer was the same as before; it was the only head worn at ————.

Nor is their behaviour less changed than their garb. Instead of joining in the good-humoured cheerfulness we used to have among us before, my two *fine* young ladies check every approach to mirth, by calling it *vulgar*. One of them chid their brother the other day for laughing, and told him it was monstrously ill-bred. In the evenings, when we were wont, if we had nothing else to do, to fall to *Blindman's-buff*, or *Cross purposes*, or sometimes to play at *Loo* for cherry-stones, these two get a pack of cards to themselves, and sit down to play for any little money their visit has left them, at a game none of us know any thing about. It seems, indeed, the dullest of all amusements, as it consists in merely turning up the faces of the cards, and repeating their names from an *ace* upwards, as if the players were learning to speak, and had got only thirteen words in their vocabulary. But of this, and every other

custom at ———, nobody is allowed to judge but themselves. They have got a parcel of phrases, which they utter on all occasions as decisive, *French*, I believe, though I can scarce find any of them in the Dictionary, and am unable to put them upon paper; but all of them mean something extremely fashionable, and are constantly supported by the authority of my Lady, or the Countess, his Lordship, or Sir John.

As they have learned many foreign, so have they unlearned some of the most common and best understood home phrases. When one of my neighbours was lamenting the extravagance and dissipation of a young kinsman who had spent his fortune, and lost his health in London, and at Newmarket, they called it *life*, and said it shewed spirit in the young man. After the same rule they lately declared, that a gentleman could not *live* on less than 1000 *l.* a year, and called the account which their mantuamaker and milliner sent me, for the fineries purchased for their visit at ——— —, a *trifle*, though it amounted to 59 *l.* 11 *s.* 4 *d.* exactly a fourth part of the clear income of my estate.

All this, Mr. Mirror, I look upon as a sort of pestilential disorder, with which my poor daughters have been infected in the course of this unfortunate visit. This consideration has induced me to treat them hitherto with lenity and indulgence, and try to effect their cure by mild methods, which indeed suit my temper (naturally of a pliant kind, as every body, except my wife, says) better than harsh ones. Yet I confess, I could not help being in a passion t'other day, when the disorder shewed symptoms of a more serious kind. Would you believe it, Sir, my daughter *Elizabeth* (since her visit she is offended if we call her *Betty*) said it was *fanatical* to find fault with card playing on Sunday; and her sister *Sophia* gravely asked my son-in-law, the

clergyman, if he had not some doubts of the soul's immortality.

As certain great cities, I have heard, are never free from the *plague*, and at last come to look upon it as nothing terrible or extraordinary; so, I suppose, in London, or even your town, Sir, this disease always prevails, and is but little dreaded. But, in the country, it will be productive of melancholy effects indeed; if suffered to spread there, it will not only embitter our lives, and spoil our domestic happiness, as at present it does mine, but, in its most violent stages, will bring our estates to market, our daughters to ruin, and our sons to the gallows. Be so humane, therefore, Mr. MIRROR, as to suggest some expedient for keeping it confined within those limits in which it rages at present. If no public regulation can be contrived for that purpose (though I cannot help thinking this disease of the great people merits the attention of government, as much as the distemper among the *horned cattle*), try, at least, the effects of private admonition, to prevent the sound from approaching the infected; let all *little men* like myself, and every member of their families, be cautious of holding intercourse with the persons or families of *Dukes*, *Earls*, *Lords*, *Nabobs*, or *Contractors*, till they have good reason to believe that such persons and their households are in a sane and healthy state, and in no danger of communicating this dreadful disorder. And, if it has left such great and noble persons any feelings of compassion, pray put them in mind of that well-known fable of the *boys* and the *frogs*, which they must have learned at school. Tell them, Sir, that though the making fools of their poor neighbours may serve them for a Christmas gambol, it is matter of serious wretchedness to those poor neighbours in the after-part of their lives: *It is sport to them, but death to us.*

I am, &c.

Z JOHN HOMESPUN.

N° 13. TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 1779.

THE antiquity of the poems ascribed to *Ossian*, the son of *Fingal*, has been the subject of much dispute. The refined magnanimity and generosity of the heroes, and the tenderness and the delicacy of sentiment, with regard to women, so conspicuous in those poems, are circumstances very difficult to reconcile with the rude and uncultivated age in which the poet is supposed to have lived. On the other hand, the intrinsic characters of antiquity which the poems bear; that simple state of society the poet paints; the narrow circle of objects and transactions he describes; his concise, abrupt, and figurative style; the absence of all abstract ideas, and of all modern allusions, render it difficult to assign any other æra for their production than the age of Fingal. In short, there are difficulties on both sides; and, if that remarkable refinement of manners seem inconsistent with our notions of an unimproved age, the marks of antiquity with which the poems are stamped, make it very hard to suppose them a modern composition. It is not, however, my intention to examine the merits of this controversy, much less to hazard any judgment of my own. All I propose is, to suggest one consideration on the subject, which, as far as I can recollect, has hitherto escaped the partisans of either side.

The elegant author of the *Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian*, has very properly obviated the

objections made to the uniformity of Ossian's imagery, and the too frequent repetition of the same comparisons. He has shewn, that this objection proceeds from a careless and inattentive perusal of the poems; for, although the range of the poet's objects was not wide, and consequently the same object does often return, yet its appearance is changed; the image is new; it is presented to the fancy in another attitude, and clothed with different circumstances, to make it suit the illustration for which it is employed. 'In this,' continues he, 'lies Ossian's 'great *art*;' and he illustrates his remark by taking the instances of the *moon* and of *mist*, two of the principal subjects of the bard's images and allusions.

I agree with this critic in his observations, though I think he has rather erred in ascribing to *art* in Ossian, that wonderful diversification of the narrow circle of objects with which he was acquainted. It was not by any efforts of art or contrivance that Ossian presented the rude objects of nature under so many different aspects. He wrote from a full heart, from a rich and glowing imagination. He did not seek for, and invent images; he copied nature, and painted objects as they struck and kindled his fancy. He had nothing within the range of his view, but the great features of simple nature. The sun, the moon, the stars, the desert heath, the winding stream, the green hill with all its roes, and the rock with its robe of mist, were the objects amidst which Ossian lived. Contemplating these, under every variety of appearance they could assume, no wonder that his warm and empassioned genius found in them a field fruitful of the most lofty and sublime imagery.

Thus the very circumstance of his having such a circumscribed range of inanimate objects to attract his attention and exercise his imagination, was the

natural and necessary cause of Ossian's being able to view and to describe them, under such a variety of great and beautiful appearances. And may we not proceed farther, and affirm, that so rich a diversification of the few appearances of simple nature, could hardly have occurred to the imagination of a poet living in any other than the rude and early age in which the son of Fingal appeared?

In refined and polished society, where the works of art abound, the endless variety of objects that present themselves, distract and dissipate the attention. The mind is perpetually hurried from one object to another; and no time is left to dwell upon the sublime and simple appearances of nature. A poet, in such an age, has a wide and diversified circle of objects on which to exercise his imagination. He has a large and diffused stock of materials from which to draw images to embellish his work; and he does not always resort for his imagery to the diversified appearance of the objects of rude nature; he does not avoid those because his taste rejects them; but he uses them seldom, because they seldom recur to his imagination.

To seize these images, belongs only to the poet of an early and simple age, where the undivided attention has leisure to brood over the few, but sublime objects which surround him. The *sea* and the *heath*, the *rock* and the *torrent*, the *clouds* and *meteors*, the *thunder* and *lightning*, the *sun* and *moon*, and *stars*, are, as it were, the companions with which his imagination holds converse. He personifies and addresses them: every aspect they can assume is impressed upon his mind: he contemplates and traces them through all the endless varieties of seasons; and they are the perpetual subjects of his images and allusions. He has, indeed, only a few objects around him; but, for that very reason, he forms a more

intimate acquaintance with their every feature, and shade, and attitude.

From this circumstance, it would seem, that the poetical productions of widely-distant periods of society must ever bear strong marks of the age which gave them birth; and that it is not possible for a poetical genius of the one age, to counterfeit and imitate the productions of the other. To the poet of a simple age, the varied objects which present themselves in cultivated society are unknown. To the poet of a refined age, the idea of imitating the productions of rude times might, perhaps, occur; but the execution would certainly be difficult, perhaps impracticable. To catch some few transient aspects of any of the great appearances of nature, may be within the reach of the genius of any age; but to perceive, and feel, and paint, all the shades of a few simple objects, and to make them correspond with a great diversity of subjects, the poet must dwell amidst them, and have them ever present to his mind.

The excellent critic, whom I have already mentioned, has selected the instances of the *moon* and of *mist*, to shew how much Ossian has diversified the appearance of the few objects with which he was encircled, I shall now conclude this paper with selecting a *third*, that of the *Sun*, which, I think, the bard has presented in such a variety of aspects, as could have occurred to the imagination in no other than the early and unimproved age in which Ossian is supposed to have lived.

The vanquished *Frothal*, struck with the generous magnanimity of Fingal, addresses him: 'Terrible 'art thou, O king of Morven, in battles of the 'spears; but, in peace, thou art like the sun, when 'he looks through a silent shower; the flowers lift 'their fair heads before him, and the gales shake their

'rustling wings.' Of the generous open *Cathmor*, exposed to the dark and gloomy *Cairbar*, it is said: 'His face was like the plain of the sun, when it is 'bright: no darkness travelled over his brow.' Of *Nathos*: 'the soul of Nathos was generous and 'mild, like the hour of the setting sun.' Of young *Connal*, coming to seek the honour of the spear: 'The youth was lovely, as the first beam of the 'sun.'——'O! Fithil's son,' says Cuchullin, 'with feet of wind, fly over the heath of Lena. 'Tell to Fingal, that Erin is enthrall'd, and bid the 'king of Morven hasten. O! let him come like 'the sun in a storm, when he shines on the hills of 'grass.'

Nathos, anxious for the fate of Darthula: 'The 'soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun in the day of 'mist, when his face is watry and dim.'——— *Oscar*, surrounded with foes, foreseeing the fall of his race, and yet at times gathering hope: 'At 'times, he was thoughtful and dark, like the sun 'when he carries a cloud on his face; but he looks 'afterward on the hills of Cona.'———Before *Bosmina* sent to offer them the peace of heroes: 'The host of Erragon brightened in her presence, 'as a rock before the sudden beams of the sun, 'when they issue from a broken cloud, divided by 'the roaring wind.' The remembrance of battles past, and the return of peace, is compared to the sun returning after a storm: 'Hear the battle of 'Lora! the sound of its steel is long since past; so 'thunder on the darkened hill roars, and is no more; 'the sun returns with his silent beams; the glitter-'ing rocks, and green heads of the mountains, 'smile.'

Fingal in his strength darkening in the presence of war: 'His arm stretches to the foe like the beam 'of the sickly sun, when his side is crusted with

'darkness, and he rolls his dismal course through-
'out the sky.' A young hero exulting in his strength, and rushing towards his foes, exclaims, 'My beating soul is high! My fame is bright be-
'fore me, like the streak of light on a cloud when
'the broad sun comes forth, red traveller of the
'sky!' On another occasion, says a hero, 'I have
'met the battle in my youth. My arm could not
'lift the spear when first the danger rose; but my
'soul brightened before the war as the green nar-
'row vale, when the sun pours his streamy beams,
'before he hides his head in a storm!'

But it would exceed the proper bounds of this paper, were I to bring together all the passages which might illustrate my remarks. Without, therefore, quoting the beautiful address to the Sun, which finishes the second book of *Temora*, or that at the beginning of *Carricthura*, I shall conclude with laying before my readers that sublime passage at the end of *Carthon*, where the aged bard, thrown into melancholy by the remembrance of that hero, thus pours himself forth:

—'I feel the sun, O Malvina! leave me to my
'rest. The beam of Heaven delights to shine on
'the grave of Carthon; I feel it warm around.

—'O thou that rollest above, round as the
'shield of my fathers! whence are thy beams, O
'Sun? thy everlasting light! Thou comest forth
'in thy awful beauty, and the stars hide themselves
'in the sky: The moon, cold and pale, sinks in the
'western wave, but thou thyself movest alone: who
'can be a companion of thy course? The oaks of
'the mountain fall; the mountains themselves de-
'cay with years; the ocean shrinks, and grows
'again; the moon herself is lost in Heaven; but
'thou art for ever the same, rejoicing in the
'brightness of thy course. When the world is dark

'with tempest; when thunder rolls, and lightning 'flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, 'and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou 'lookest in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; 'whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern 'clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. 'But thou art, perhaps, like me, for a season, and 'thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in 'thy clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. 'Exult then, O sun, in the strength of thy youth! 'Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering 'light of the moon, when it shines through 'broken clouds; the blast of the north is on the 'plain, and the traveller shrinks in the midst of his 'journey.'

G.

N° 14. SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 1779.

——— Inertibus horis
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ.

HOR.

THERE are some weaknesses, which, as they do not strike us with the malignity of crimes, and produce their effects by imperceptible progress, we are apt to consider as venial, and make very little scruple of indulging. But the habit, which apologizes for these, is a mischief of their own creation, which it behoves us early to resist. We give way to it at first, because it may be conquered at any time; and, at last, excuse ourselves from the contest, because it has grown too strong to be overcome.

Of this nature is *indolence*, a failing, I had almost said a vice, of all others the least alarming, yet, perhaps, the most fatal. Dissipation and intemperance are often the transient effects of youthful heat, which time allays, and experience overcomes; but indolence 'grows with our growth, and strengthens 'with our strength,' till it has weakened every exertion of public and private duty; yet so seducing, that its evils are unfelt, and its errors unrepented of.

It is a circumstance of peculiar regret, that this should often be the propensity of delicate and amiable minds. Men unfeeling and unsusceptible, commonly beat the beaten track with activity and resolution; the occupations they pursue, and the enjoyments they feel, seldom much disappoint the expectations they have formed; but persons endowed with that nice perception of pleasure and pain which is annexed to sensibility, feel so much undescribable uneasiness in their pursuits, and frequently so little satisfaction in their attainments, that they are too often induced to sit still, without attempting the one or desiring the other.

The complaints which such persons make of their want of that success which attends men of inferior abilities, are as unjust as unavailing. It is from the use, not the possession of talents, that we get on in life: the exertion of very moderate parts outweighs the indecision of the brightest. Men possessed of the first, do things tolerably, and are satisfied; of the last, forbear doing things well, because they have ideas beyond them.

When I first resolved to publish this paper, I applied to several literary friends for their aid in carrying it on. From one gentleman in London, I had, in particular, very sanguine expectations of assistance. His genius and abilities I had early opportunities of knowing, and he is now in a situation

most favourable to such productions, as he lives amidst the great and the busy world, without being much occupied either by ambition or business. His compositions at college, when I first became acquainted with him, were remarkable for elegance and ingenuity; and, as I knew he still spent much of his time in reading the best writers, ancient and modern, I made no doubt of his having attained such farther improvement of style, and extension of knowledge, as would render him a very valuable contributor to the MIRROR.

A few days ago, more than four months after I had sent him my letter, I received the following answer to it.

London, 1st March, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM ashamed to look on the date of this letter, and to recollect that of yours. I will not, however, add the sin of hypocrisy to my other failings, by informing you, as is often done in such cases, that hurry of business, or want of health, has prevented me from answering your letter. I will frankly confess, that I have had abundance of leisure, and been perfectly well since I received it; I can add, though, perhaps, you may not so easily believe me, that I have had as much inclination as opportunity; but the truth is (you know my weakness that way), I have wished, resolved, and re-resolved to write, as I do by many other things, without the power of accomplishing it. That disease of indolence, which you and my other companions used to laugh at, grows stronger and stronger upon me; my symptoms, indeed, are mortal; for I begin now to lose

the power of struggling against the malady, sometimes to shut my ears against self-admonition, and admit of it as a lawful indulgence.

Your letter, acquainting me of the design of publishing a periodical paper, and asking my assistance in carrying it on, found me in one of the paroxysms of my disorder. The fit seemed to give way to the call of friendship. I got up from my easy chair, walked two or three turns through the room, read your letter again, looked at the Spectators, which stood, neatly bound and gilt, in the front of my book-press, called for pen, ink, and paper, and sat down, in the fervour of imagination, ready to combat vice, to encourage virtue, to form the manners, and to regulate the taste of millions of my fellow-subjects. A field fruitful and unbounded lay before me; I began to speculate on the prevailing vices and reigning follies of the times, the thousand topics which might arise for declamation, satire, ridicule, and humour; the picture of manners, the shades of character, the delicacies of sentiment. I was bewildered amidst this multitude and variety of subjects, and sat dreaming over the redundancy of matter and the ease of writing, till the morning was spent, and my servant announced dinner.

I arose, satisfied with having thought much on subjects proper for your paper. I dined, if you will allow me the expression, in company with those thoughts, and drank half a bottle of wine after dinner to our better acquaintance. When my man took away, I returned to my study, sat down at my writing-table, folded my paper into proper margins, wrote the word *Mirror* a-top, and filling my pen again, drew up the curtain, and prepared to delineate the scene before me. But I found things not quite in the situation I had left them; the groupes were more confused, the figures less striking, the colours

less vivid, than I had seen them before dinner. I continued, however, to look on them—I know not how long; for I was waked from a very sound nap, at half an hour past six, by *Peter* asking me, if I chose to drink coffee.

I was ashamed and vexed at the situation in which he found me. I drank my first dish rather out of humour with myself; but, during the second, I began to account for it from natural causes; and, before the third was finished, had resolved that study was improper after *repletion*, and concluded the evening with the adventures of one of the *three Callendars*, out of *the Arabian Nights Entertainments*.

For all this arrear, I drew, resolutely, on to-morrow, and after breakfast prepared myself accordingly. I had actually gone so far as to write three introductory sentences, all of which I burnt, and was just blacking the letter *T*. for the beginning of a fourth, when Peter opened the door, and announced a gentleman, an old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for a considerable time. After he had sat with me for more than an hour, he rose to go away; I pulled out my watch, and I will fairly own I was not sorry to find it within a few minutes of one: so I gave up the morning for lost, and invited myself to accompany my friend in some visits he proposed making. Our tour concluded in a dinner at a tavern, whence we repaired to the play, and did not part till midnight. I went to bed without much self-reproach, by considering, that intercourse with the world fits a man for reforming it.

I need not go through every day of the subsequent month, during which I remained in town, though there seldom passed one that did not remind me of what I owed to your friendship. It is enough to tell you, that during the first fortnight, I always

found some apology for delaying the execution of my purpose; and, during the last, contented myself with the prospect of the leisure I should soon enjoy in the country, to which I was invited by a relation to spend some time with him previous to his coming to town for the winter. I arrived at his house about the middle of December. I looked on his fields, his walks, and his woods, which the extreme mildness of the season had still left in the garb of *Thomson*'s philosophic melancholy, as scenes full of inspiration, in which Genius might try her wings, and Wisdom meditate without interruption. But I am obliged to own, that, though I have walked there many a time; though my fancy was warmed with the scene, and shot out into a thousand excursions over the regions of romance, of melancholy, of sentiment, of humour, of criticism, and of science, she returned, like the first messenger of *Noah*, without having found a resting-place; and I have, at last, strolled back to the house, where I sat listless in my chamber, with the irksome consciousness of some unperformed resolution, from which I was glad to be relieved by a summons to billiards, or a call to dinner.

Thus have I returned to town, as unprofitable in the moments of solitude and retirement, as in those of business or society. Do not smile at the word *business;* what would be idleness to you, is to me very serious employment: besides, you know very well, that to be idle, is often to be least at leisure. I am now almost hardy enough to lay aside altogether my resolution of writing in your paper; but I find that resolution a sort of bond against me, till you are good enough to cancel it, by saying, you do not expect me to write. I have made a more than ordinary effort to give you this sincere account of

my attempts to assist you. I have at least the consolation of thinking that you will not need my assistance. Believe me, with all my failings,

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

P. S. I have just now learned by accident, that my nephew, a lad of fifteen, who is come to town from *Harrow* school, and lives at present with me, having seen one of your Numbers about a week ago, has already written, and intends transmitting you, a political essay, signed *Aristides*, a pastoral subscribed X. Y. and an acrostic on Miss E. M. without a signature.

V

N° 15. TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 1779.

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant.

HOR.

However widely the thinking part of mankind may have differed as to the proper mode of conducting education, they have always been unanimous in their opinion of its importance. The outward effects of it are observed by the most inattentive. They know, that the *clown* and the *dancing-master* are the same from the hand of nature; and, although a little farther reflection is necessary to perceive the effects of culture on the internal senses, it cannot be disputed that the mind, like the body, when arrived at firm-

ness and maturity, retains the impressions it received in a more pliant and tender age.

The greatest part of mankind, born to labour for their subsistence, are fixed in habits of industry by the iron hand of necessity. They have little time or opportunity for the cultivation of the understanding; the errors and immoralities in their conduct, that flow from the want of those sentiments which education is intended to produce, will, on that account, meet with indulgence from every benevolent mind. But those who are placed in a conspicuous station, whose vices become more complicated and destructive, by the abuse of knowledge, and the misapplication of improved talents, have no title to the same indulgence. Their guilt is heightened by the rank and fortune which protect them from punishment, and which, in some degree, preserve them from that infamy their conduct has merited.

I hold it, then, uncontrovertible, that the higher the rank, the more urgent is the necessity for storing the mind with the principles, and directing the passions to the practice, of public and private virtue. Perhaps it might not be impossible to form plans of education, to lay down rules, and contrive institutions, for the instruction of youth of all ranks, that would have a general influence upon manners. But this is an attempt too arduous for a private hand; it can be expected only from the great council of the nation, when they shall be pleased to apply their experienced wisdom and penetration to so material an object, which, in some future period, may be found not less deserving their attention than those important debates in which they are frequently engaged, which they conduct with an elegance, a decorum, and a public spirit, becoming the incorrupted, disinterested, virtuous representatives of a great and flourishing people.

While in expectation of this, perhaps distant, æra, I hope it will not be unacceptable to my readers to suggest some hints that may be useful in the education of the gentleman, to try if it be not possible to form an alliance between the virtues and the graces, the man and the citizen, and produce a being less dishonourable to the species than the courtier of Lord *Chesterfield*, and more useful to society than the savage of *Rousseau*.

The sagacious *Locke*, toward the end of the last century, gave to the public some thoughts on education, the general merit of which leaves room to regret that he did not find time, as he seemed once to have intended, to revise what he had written, and give a complete treatise on the subject. But, with all the veneration I feel for that great man, and all the respect that is due to him, I cannot help being of opinion, that some of his observations have laid the foundation of that defective system of education, the fatal consequences of which are so well described by my Correspondent in the Letter published in my Fourth number. Mr. *Locke*, sensible of the labyrinth with which the pedantry of the learned had surrounded all the avenues to science, successfully employed the strength of his genius to trace knowledge to her source, and point out the direct road to succeeding generations. Disgusted with the schoolmen, he, from a prejudice to which even great minds are liable, seems to have contracted a dislike to every thing they taught, and even to the languages in in which they wrote. He scruples not to speak of *grammar* as unnecessary to the perfect knowledge either of the dead or living languages, and to affirm, that a part of the years thrown away in the study of *Greek* and *Latin*, would be better employed in learning the trades of *gardeners* and *turners*; as if it were a fitter and more useful recreation for a gentleman

to plant potatoes, and to make chess-boards and snuff boxes, than to study the beauties of *Cicero* and *Homer*.

It will be allowed by all, that the great purpose of education is to form the man and the citizen, that he may be virtuous, happy in himself, and useful to society. To attain this end, his education should begin, as it were, from his birth, and be continued till he arrive at firmness and maturity of mind, as well as of body. Sincerity, truth, justice, and humanity, are to be cultivated from the first dawnings of memory and observation. As the powers of these increase, the genius and disposition unfold themselves; it then becomes necessary to check, in the bud, every propensity to folly or to vice; to root out every mean, selfish, and ungenerous sentiment; to warm and animate the heart in the pursuit of virtue and honour. The experience of ages has hitherto discovered no surer method of giving right impressions to young minds, than by frequently exhibiting to them those bright examples which history affords, and, by that means, inspiring them with those sentiments of public and private virtue which breathe in the writings of the sages of antiquity.

In this view, I have ever considered the acquisition of the dead languages as a most important branch in the education of a gentleman. Not to mention that the slowness with which he acquires them, prevents his memory from being loaded with facts faster than his growing reason can compare and distinguish, he becomes acquainted by degrees with the virtuous characters of ancient times; he admires their justice, temperance, fortitude, and public spirit, and burns with a desire to imitate them. The impressions these have made, and the restraints to which he has been accustomed, serve as a check to the many tumultuous passions which the

ideas of religion alone would, at that age, be unable to controul. Every victory he obtains over himself serves as a new guard to virtue. When he errs, he becomes sensible of his weakness, which, at the same time that it teaches him moderation, and forgiveness to others, shows the necessity of keeping a stricter watch over his own actions. During these combats, his reasoning faculties expand, his judgment ſtrengthens, and, while he becomes acquainted with the corruptions of the world, he fixes himself in the practice of virtue.

A man thus educated, enters upon the theatre of the world with many and great advantages. Accustomed to reflection, acquainted with human nature, the strength of virtue, and depravity of vice, he can trace actions to their source, and be enabled, in the affairs of life, to avail himself of the wisdom and experience of past ages.

Very different is the modern plan of education followed by many, especially with the children of persons in superior rank. They are introduced into the world almost from their very infancy. In place of having their minds stored with the bright examples of antiquity, or those of modern times, the first knowledge they acquire is of the vices with which they are surrounded; and they learn what mankind are, without ever knowing what they ought to be. Possessed of no sentiment of virtue, of no social affection, they indulge, to the utmost of their ability, the gratification of every selfish appetite, without any other restraint than what self-interest dictates. In men thus educated, youth is not the season of virtue; they have contracted the cold indifference and all the vices of age, long before they arrive at manhood. If they attain to the great offices of the state, they become ministers as void of knowledge as of principle; equally regardless of the

national honour as of their own, their system of government (if it can be called a system) looks not beyond the present moment, and any apparent exertions for the public good, are meant only as props to support themselves in office. In the field, at the head of armies, indifferent as to the fate of their fellow-soldiers, or of their country, they make their power the minister of their pleasures. If the wisdom of their sovereign should, happily for himself and his country, shut them out from his councils, should they be confined to a private station, finding no entertainment in their own breasts, as void of friends as incapable of friendship, they sink reflection in a life of dissipation.

If the probable consequences of those different modes of education be such as I have mentioned, there can be little doubt to which the preference belongs, even though that which is preferred should be less conducive than its opposite to those elegant accomplishments which decorate society. But, upon examination, I believe even this objection will vanish; for, although I willingly admit, that a certain degree of pedantry is inseparable from the learning of the divine, the physician, or the lawyer, which a late commerce with the world is unable to wear off, yet learning is, in no respect, inconsistent, either with that graceful ease and elegance of address peculiar to men of fashion, or with what, in modern phrase, is called knowledge of the world. The man of superior accomplishments will, indeed, be indifferent about many things which are the chief objects of attention to the modern fine gentleman. To conform to all the minute changes of the mode, to be admired for the gaudiness of his equipage, to boast of his success in intrigue, or publish favours he never received, will to him appear frivolous and dishonourable.

As many of the bad effects of the present system of education may be attributed to a premature introduction into the world, I shall conclude this paper, by reminding those parents and guardians who are so anxious to bring their children and pupils early into public life, that one of the finest gentlemen, the brightest geniuses, the most useful and best informed citizens of which antiquity has left us an example, did not think himself qualified to appear in public till the age of twenty-six, and continued his studies, for some years after, under the eminent teachers of Greece and Rome.

H

N° 16. SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1779.

O prima vera gioventu de l'anno,
Bella madre di fiori,
D'erbe novelle, e di novelli amori;
Tu torni ben, ma teco
No tornano i sereni
E fortunati di de le mie gioie.

GUARINI.

The effects of the return of *Spring* have been frequently remarked, as well in relation to the human mind, as to the animal and vegetable world. The reviving power of this season has been traced from the fields to the herds that inhabit them, aad from the lower classes of beings up to man. Gladness and joy are described as prevailing through universal nature, animating the low of the cattle, the carrol of the birds, and the pipe of the shepherd.

I know not if it be from a singular, or a censurable disposition, that I have often felt in my own mind something very different from this gaiety, supposed to be the inseparable attendant of the vernal scene. Amidst the returning verdure of the earth, the mildness of the air, and the serenity of the sky, I have found a still and quiet melancholy take possession of my soul, which the beauty of the landscape, and the melody of the birds, rather soothed than overcame.

Perhaps some reason may be given why this sort of feeling should prevail over the mind, in those moments of deeper pensiveness to which every thinking mind is liable, more at this time of the year than at any other. Spring, as the renewal of verdure and of vegetation, becomes naturally the season of remembrance. We are surrounded with objects new only in their revival, but which we acknowledge as our acquaintance in the years that are past. Winter, which stopped the progression of nature, removed them from us for a while, and we meet, like friends long parted, with emotions rather of tenderness than of gaiety.

This train of ideas once awaked, memory follows over a very extensive field. And, in such a disposition of mind, objects of cheerfulness and delight are, from those very qualities, the most adapted to inspire that milder sort of sadness which, in the language of our native bard, is 'pleasant and mournful to the 'soul.' They will inspire this, not only from the recollection of the past, but from the prospect of the future; as an anxious parent, amidst the sportive gaiety of the child, often thinks of the cares of manhood and the sorrows of age.

This effect will, at least, be commonly felt by persons who have lived long enough to see, and had reflection enough to observe, the vicissitudes of life.

Even those who have never experienced severe calamities, will find, in the review of their years, a thousand instances of fallacious promises and disappointed hopes. The dream of childhood, and the project of youth, have vanished to give place to sensations of a very different kind. In the peace and beauty of the rural scene which spring first unfolds to us, we are apt to recal the former state, with an exaggerated idea of its happiness, and to feel the present with increased dissatisfaction.

But the pencil of memory stops not with the representation of ourselves; it traces also the companions and friends of our early days, and marks the changes which they have undergone. It is a dizzy sort of recollection to think over the names of our school-fellows, and to consider how very few of them the maze of accidents, and the sweep of time, have left within our reach. This, however, is less pointed than the reflection on the fate of those whom affinity or friendship linked to our side, whom distance of place, premature death, or (sometimes not a less painful consideration) estrangement of affection, has disjoined from us for ever.

I am not sure if the disposition to reflections of this sort be altogether a safe or a proper one. I am aware, that, if too much indulged, or allowed to become habitual, it may disqualify the mind for the more active and bustling scenes of life, and unfit it for the enjoyments of ordinary society; but, in a certain degree, I am persuaded it may be found useful. We are all of us too little inclined to look into our own minds, all apt to put too high a value on the things of this life. But a man under the impressions I have described, will be led to look into himself, and will see the vanity of setting his heart upon external enjoyment. He will feel nothing of that unsocial spirit which gloomy and ascetic severities in-

spire ; but the gentle, and not unpleasing melancholy that will be diffused over his soul, will fill it with a calm and sweet benevolence, will elevate him much above any mean or selfish passion. It will teach him to look upon the rest of the world as his brethren, travelling the same road, and subject to the like calamities with himself ; it will prompt his wish to alleviate and assuage the bitterness of their sufferings, and extinguish in his heart every sentiment of malevolence or of envy.

Amidst the tide of pleasure which flows on a mind of little sensibility, there may be much social joy without any social affection ; but, in a heart of the mould I allude to above, though the joy may be less, there will, I believe, be more happiness and more virtue.

It is rarely from the precepts of the moralist, or the mere sense of duty, that we acquire the virtues of gentleness, disinterestedness, benevolence, and humanity. The feelings must be won, as well as the reason convinced, before men change their conduct. To them the world addresses itself, and is heard : it offers pleasure to the present hour ; and the promise of satisfaction in the future is too often preached in vain. But he who can feel that luxury of pensive tenderness of which I have given some faint sketches in this paper, will not easily be won from the pride of virtue, and the dignity of thought, to the inordinate gratifications of vice or the intemperate amusements of folly.

V

N° 17. TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 1779.

Insanit veteres statuas Damasippus emendo.

HOR.

To the EDITOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

As I am persuaded that you will not think it without the province of a work such as yours, to throw your eye sometimes upon the inferior ranks of life, where there is any error that calls loud for amendment, I will make no apology for sending you the following narrative.

I was married, about five years ago, to a young man in a good way of business as a grocer, whose character, for sobriety and diligence in his trade, was such as to give me the assurance of a very comfortable establishment in the mean time, and, in case Providence should bless us with children, the prospect of making a tolerable provision for them. For three years after our marriage there never was a happier couple. Our shop was so well frequented, as to require the constant attendance of both of us; and, as it was my greatest pleasure to see the cheerful activity of my husband, and the obliging attention which he showed to every customer, he has often during that happy time, declared to me, that the sight of my face behind the counter (though indeed, Sir, my looks are but homely) made him think his humble condition far more blessed than that of the wealthiest of our neighbours, whose possessions deprived them of the high satisfaction of

purchasing, by their daily labour, the comfort and happiness of a beloved object.

In the evenings, after our small repast, which, if the day had been more than usually busy, we sometimes ventured to finish with a glass or two of punch; while my husband was constantly engaged with his books and accounts, it was my employment to sit by his side knitting, and, at the same time, to tend the cradle of our first child, a girl, who is now a fine prattling creature of four years of age, and begins already to give me some little assistance in the care of her younger brother and sister.

Such was the picture of our little family, in which we once enjoyed all the happiness that virtuous industry, and the most perfect affection, can bestow. But those pleasing days, Mr. MIRROR, are now at end.

The sources of unhappiness in my situation are very different from those of other unfortunate married persons. It is not of my husband's idleness or extravagance, his ill-nature or his avarice, that I have to complain; neither are we unhappy from any decrease of affection, ot disagreement in our opinions. But I will not, Sir, keep you longer in suspence. In short, it is my misfortune that my husband is become *a Man of Taste*.

The first symptom of this malady, for it is now become a *disease* indeed, manifested itself, as I have said, about two years ago, when it was my husband's ill-luck to receive one day from a customer, in payment of a pound of sugar, a crooked piece of silver, which he, at first, mistook for a shilling, but found, on examination, to have some strange characters upon it, which neither of us could make any thing of. An acquaintance coming in, who, it seems, had some knowledge of those matters declared it at once to be a very curious coin of *Alexander the Third;*

and, affirming that he knew a virtuoso who would be extremely glad to be possessed of it, bid him half a guinea for it upon the spot. My poor husband, who knew as little of *Alexander the Third*, as of *Alexander the Great*, or his other namesake, the *Coppersmith*, was nevertheless persuaded, from the extent of the offer, and the opinion he had of his friend's discernment, that he was possessed of a very valuable curiosity; and in this he was fully confirmed, when, on shewing it to the virtuoso above mentioned, he was immediately offered triple the former sum. This too was rejected, and the crooked coin was now judged to be inestimable. It would tire your patience, Mr. MIRROR, to describe minutely the progress of my husband's delirium. The neighbours soon heard of our acquisition, and flocked to be indulged with a sight of it. Others who had valuable curiosities of the same kind, but who were prudent enough not to reckon them quite beyond all price, were, by much entreaty, prevailed on by my husband to exchange them for guineas, half guineas, and crown pieces; so that, in about a month's time, he could boast of being possessed of twenty pieces, all of inestimable value, which cost him only the trifling sum of 18*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

But the malady did not rest here; it is a dreadful thing, Mr. MIRROR, *to get a taste.* It ranges from 'heaven above, to the earth beneath, and to the 'waters under the earth.' Every production of nature, or of art, remarkable either for beauty or deformity, but particularly if either *scarce* or *old*, is now the object of my husband's avidity. The profits of our business, once considerable, but now daily diminishing, are expended, not only on coins, but on shells, lumps of different coloured stones, dried butterflies, old pictures, ragged books, and worm-eaten parchments.

Our house, which it was once my highest pleasure to keep in order, it would be now equally vain to attempt cleaning as the ark of Noah. The children's bed is supplied by an *Indian canoe;* and the poor little creatures sleep three of them in a hammock, slung up to the roof between a *stuffed crocodile* and the skeleton of a *calf with two heads*. Even the commodities of our shop have been turned out to make room for trash and vermin. *Kites*, *owls*, and *bats*, are perched upon the top of our shelves; and it was but yesterday, that, putting my hand into a glass jar that used to contain pickles, I laid hold of a large *tarantula* in place of a *mangoe*.

In the bitterness of my soul, Mr. Mirror, I have been often tempted to revenge myself on the objects of my husband's phrenzy, by burning, smashing, and destroying them without mercy; but, besides that such violent procedure might have effects too dreadful upon a brain which, I fear, is already much unsettled, I could not take such a course, without being guilty of a fraud to our creditors, several of whom will, I believe, sooner or later, find it their only means of reimbursement, to take back each man his own monsters.

Meantime, Sir, as my husband constantly peruses your paper, (one instance of his taste which I cannot object to,) I have some small hopes that a good effect may be produced by giving him a fair view of himself in your moral looking-glass. If such should be the happy consequence of your publishing this letter, you shall have the sincerest thanks of a grateful heart, from your now disconsolate humble servant,

Rebecca Prune.

I cannot help expressing my suspicion that Mrs. *Rebecca Prune* has got somebody to write her letter.

If she wrote it herself, I am afraid it may be thought that the grocer's wife, who is so knowing in what she describes, and can joke so learnedly on her spouse's ignorance of the *three Alexanders*, has not much reason to complain of her husband being a *man of taste*.

Her case, however, is truly distressful, and in the particular species of her husband's disorder, rather uncommon. The taste of a man in his station generally looks for some reputation from his neighbours and the world, and walks *out of doors* to shew itself to both.

I remember, a good many years ago, to have visited the villa of a citizen of *Bath*, who had made a considerable fortune by the profession of a *toyman* in that city. It was curious to observe how much he had carried the ideas of his trade into his house and grounds, if such might be called a kind of *Gothic* building, of about 18 feet by 12, and an inclosure, somewhat short of an acre. The first had only a few closets within; but it made a most gallant and warlike shew without. It had *turrets* about the size of the *king* at *nine pins*, and *battlements* like the side-crust of a Christmas *goose-pye*. To complete the appearance of a *castle*, we entered by a *drawbridge*, which, in construction and dimensions, exactly resembled the lid of a travelling-trunk. To the right of the house was a puddle, which, however, was dignified with the name of a *harbour*, defended by two *redoubts*, under cover of which lay a vessel of the size of an ordinary *bathing-tub*, mounting a parcel of old *toothpick-cases*, fitted up into guns, and manned with some of the toyman's little family of plaything figures, with red jackets and striped trowsers, whom he had impressed into the service. The place where this vessel lay, a fat little man, whom I had met on the shore, who

seemed an intimate acquaintance of the proprietor, informed me was called *Spithead*, and the ship's name, he told me, pointing to the picture on her stern, was the *Victory*.

This gentleman afterwards conducted me, not without some fear, across a Chinese bridge, to a *pagoda*, in which it was necessary to assume the posture of devotion, as there was not room to stand upright. On the sides of the *great serpentine walk*, as he termed it, by which we returned from this edifice, I found a device, which my *Cicerone* looked upon as a master-stroke of genius. The ground was shaped into the figures of the different suits of *cards*; so that here was the *heart* walk, the *diamond* walk, the *club* walk, and the *spade* walk; the last of which had the additional advantage of being sure to produce a pun. On my observing how pleasant and ingenious all this was, my conductor answered, 'Ay, ay, let him alone 'for that; he has given them a little of every thing, 'you see: and so he may, Sir, for he can *very well* 'afford it.'

I believe we must rest the matter here. In this land of freedom there is no restraining the *liberty of being ridiculous*; I would only intreat Mr. *Prune*, and indeed many of his betters, to have some regard for their wives and families, and not to make fools of themselves, till, like the *Bath* toyman, they can *very well afford it*.

N° 18. SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1779.

Laudabunt alii claram Rhodan aut Mytelenen.
HOR.

NOTHING is more amusing to a traveller, than to observe the different characters of the inhabitants of the countries through which he passes; and to find, upon crossing a river or a mountain, as marked a difference in the manners, the sentiments, and the opinions of the people, as in their appearance, their dress, or their language. Thus, the easy vivacity of the French, is as opposite to the dignified gravity of the Spaniard on the one hand, as it is to the phlegmatic dulness of the German on the other. But, though all allow that every nation has some striking feature, some distinguishing characteristic, philosophers are not agreed as to the causes of that distinction. *Montesquieu* has exerted all the powers of his genius to prove, that difference of climate is the chief, or the only cause of the difference of national characters; and it is not surprising that the opinion of so great a man should have gained much ground. None of his followers has carried the matter farther than the author of *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Americains*, whose chief object seems to have been to show, that the climate of America is of such a nature, that, from its baneful influence, even the human species has degenerated in that quarter of the globe.

I must confess, however, that I have often doubted as to the justness of this opinion; and, though

I do not mean to deny that climate has an influence on man, as well as on other animals, I cannot help thinking that *Montesquieu*, and the writers who have adopted his system, have attributed by far too much to it.

It must be allowed, that man is less affected by the influence of climate than any other animal. But of all the human race, an American savage seems to approach the nearest, in the general condition of his life, to the brute creation, and, of consequence, ought to be most subject to the power of climate. And yet, if we compare an Indian with an European peasant or manufacturer, we shall be apt to think, that the former, considered as an individual, holds a higher rank in the scale of being than the latter.

The savage, quitting his cabin, goes to the assembly of his tribe, and there delivers his sentiments on the affairs of his little nation with a spirit, a force, and an energy, that might do honour to an European orator. Thence he goes to make war upon his foes; and, in the field, discovers a sagacity in his stratagems, a boldness in his designs, a perseverance in his operations, joined with a patience of fatigue and of suffering, that have long been objects of admiration, and which filled the inhabitants of the Old World, when they first beheld them, with wonder and astonishment. How superior such a being to one occupied, day after, in turning the head of a *pin*, or forming the shape of a *button*, and possessing not one idea beyond the business in which he is immediately employed!

It may perhaps be objected, that no fair comparison can be made where the state of society is so different, the necessary effect of civilization being to introduce a distinction of ranks, and to sink the lower orders of men far beneath that station to which by nature they are entitled. But allowing this ob-

servation to be just, we shall find, upon comparing the savage of America with the savage of Europe, as described by Cæsar and Tacitus, that the former is at least equal to the latter in all the virtues above enumerated.

We need not, however, go so far for instances, to shew, that other causes act more powerfully than climate, in forming the manners, and fixing the characters of men. *London* and *Paris* are, at present, the first cities in Europe, in point of opulence and number of inhabitants; and in no other part of the western world are the polite and elegant arts cultivated to such advantage. But the inhabitants of those cities differ essentially in manners, sentiments, and opinions; while, at the same time, they breathe an air so very much alike, that it is impossible to impute that difference, in any considerable degree, to difference of climate; and, perhaps, it may not be a difficult task to point out various other causes, which may enable us to account sufficiently for the distinction between the national character of the two people.

In France, the power of the great nobles was sooner reduced within bounds than in *England;* and, in proportion as their power fell, that of the monarch rose. But no sooner was the authority of the crown established on a firm basis, than the court became an object of the first attention and importance. Every man of genius, of distinction, and of rank, hastened thither, in hopes of meeting with that encouragement which his talents merited, or of being able to display, on the only proper theatre, those advantages which he possessed, either in reality, or in his own imagination.

Thus Paris, the seat of the court, became the centre of all that was great and noble, elegant and polite. The manners every day became more and more polished; and no man who did not possess

the talents necessary to make himself agreeable, could expect to rise in the world, however great his abilities might otherwise be. The pleasures of society were cultivated with care and assiduity; and nothing tended more to promote them, than that free intercourse which soon came to take place between the sexes. All men studied to acquire those graces and accomplishments by which alone they could hope to recommend themselves to the ladies, whose influence pervaded every branch of government and every department of the state.

In England, on the other hand, the crown gained little by the fall of the nobility. The high prerogative exerted by the princes of the *Tudor* race, was of short duration. A third order soon arose, that, for a time, trampled alike on the throne and the nobles. And, even after the constitution was at length happily settled, the Sovereign remained so limited in power and in revenue, that his court never acquired a degree of influence or splendor at all comparable to that of the French monarch. London had become so great and opulent by its extensive commerce, that the residence of the court could add little to that consideration in which it was already held. This circumstance had a powerful effect on the manners. What was looked upon as a virtue at Paris, was in London considered as a vice. There industry and frugality were so essentially requisite, that every elegant accomplishment was rejected as incompatible with those great commercial virtues.

The dark and gloomy spirit of fanaticism, which prevailed so universally in England during the last century, served as an additional barrier against the progress of politeness and elegance of manners. Add to this, that the English (owing perhaps to the superior degree of liberty they enjoy, and to their high independent spirit) have ever been more attached to

a country life than any civilized people in Europe; and this last circumstance, slight as it may appear, has perhaps had as powerful an influence as any I have mentioned. A man, who lives in retirement, may be sincere, open, honourable, above dissimulation, and free from disguise; but he never can possess that ease of behaviour, and that elegance of manners, which nothing but a familiar acquaintance with the world, and the habit of mingling in society, and of conversing with persons of different ranks and different characters can bestow.

Let us not repine, however, at the superiority of our neighbours in this respect. It is, perhaps, impossible to possess, at once, the useful and the agreeable qualities in an eminent degree; and if ease and politeness be only attainable at the expence of sincerity in the men, and chastity in the women, I flatter myself, there are few of my readers who would not think the purchase made at too high a price.

I have, of late, remarked, with regret, an affectation of the manners of France, and a disposition in some of the higher ranks to introduce into this island that species of gallantry which has so long prevailed in that nation. But, happily, neither the habits, the dispositions, the genius of our people, nor that mixture of ranks which our constitution necessarily produces, will admit of it. In France, they contrive to throw over their greatest excesses a veil so delicate and so fine, as in some measure to hide the deformity of vice, and even at times to bestow upon it the semblance of virtue. But with us, less delicate and less refined, vice appears in its native colours, without concealment and without disguise; and, were the gallantry of Paris transplanted into this soil, it would soon degenerate into gross debauchery. At present my country-women are equally respected for their

virtue, as admired for their beauty; and I trust it will be long before they cease to be so.

M

N° 19. TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1779.

My friend Mr. *Umphraville*'s early retirement, and long residence in the country, have given him many peculiarities, to which, had he continued longer in the world, and had a freer intercourse with mankind, he would probably not have been subject. These give to his manner an apparent hardness, which in reality, is widely different from his natural disposition.

As he passes much time in study and solitude, and is naturally of a thoughtful cast, the subjects of which he reads, and the opinions which he forms, make a strong and deep impression on his mind; they become, as it were, friends and companions from whom he is unwilling to be separated. Hence he commonly shews a disposition to take a lead in, and give the tone to conversation, and delivers his opinions too much in the manner of a lecture. And, though this curiosity and love of information concur with that politeness which he is ever studious to observe, to make him listen with patience and attention to the opinions of others, yet, it must be confessed, that he is apt to deliver his own with an uncommon degree of warmth, and I have very seldom found him disposed to surrender them.

I find, however, nothing isagreeable in this pe-

culiarity of my friend. The natural strength of his understanding, the extent of his knowledge, and that degree of taste which he has derived from a strong conception of the sublime, the tender, and the beautiful, assisted by an extensive acquaintance with the elegant writers, both of ancient and modern times, render his conversation, in many respects, both instructive and entertaining; and that singularity of opinion, which is the natural consequence of his want of opportunities of comparing his own ideas with those of others, affords me an additional pleasure. But, above all, I am delighted with the goodness of heart which breaks forth in every sentiment he delivers.

Mr. *Umphraville*'s sister, who is often present, and sometimes takes a part in those conversations, is of a character at once amiable and respectable.

In her earlier days, she spent much of her time in the perusal of novels and romances: but, though she still retains a partiality for the few works of that kind which are possessed of merit, her reading is now chiefly confined to works of a graver cast.

Miss *Umphraville*, though she has not so much learning, possesses, perhaps, no less ability as a woman, than her brother does as a man; and, having less peculiarity in her way of thinking, has, consequently, a knowledge better fitted for common life. It is pleasing to observe how Miss *Umphraville*, while she always appears to act an under-part, and sometimes indeed, not to act a part at all, yet watches with a tender concern, over the singularities of her brother's disposition; and, without betraying the smallest consciousness of her power, generally contrives to direct him in the most material parts of his conduct.

Mr. *Umphraville* is the best master, and the best landlord, that ever lived. The rents of his estate

have undergone scarce any alteration since he came to the possession of it; and his tenants too are nearly the same. The ancient possessors have never been removed from motives of interest, or without some very particular reason; and the few new ones he has chosen to introduce, are, for the most part, persons who have been servants in his family, whose fidelity and attachment he has rewarded by a small farm at a low rent.

I have had many a pleasant conversation, about sunset in a summer evening, with those venerable grey-headed villagers. Their knowledge of country-affairs, the sagacity of their remarks, and the *manner*, acquired by a residence in Mr. *Umphraville*'s family, with which they are accustomed to deliver them, have afforded me much entertainment.

It is delightful to hear them run out in praises of their landlord. They have told me there is not a person in his neighbourhood, who stands in need of his assistance, who has not felt the influence of his generosity; which, they say, endears him to the whole country. Yet, such is the effect of that reserved and particular manner which my friend has contracted, that while his good qualities have procured him great esteem, and the disinterestedness of his disposition, with the opinion entertained of his honour and integrity, has always prevented him from falling into disputes or quarrels with his neighbours, there is scarcely one of them with whom he lives on terms of familiarity.

Mr. *Umphraville*, in the earlier part of his life, had an attachment to an amiable young lady. Their situation at that time might have made an avowal of his passion equally fatal to both; and, though it was not without a severe struggle, Mr. *Umphraville* had firmness enough to suppress the declaration of an attachment he was unable to subdue. The lady,

some time after, married; since that period, Mr. *Umphraville* has never seen her, or been known so much as once to mention her name; but I am credibly informed, that, by his interest, her eldest son has obtained high preferment in the army. The only favour which Mr. *Umphraville* ever asked from any great man was for this young gentleman; but neither the lady herself, nor any of her family, know by whose influence his advancement has been procured.

Though it is possible, that, if Mr. *Umphraville* had married at an early period of life, his mind, even in a state of retirement, would have retained a polish, and escaped many of those peculiarities it has now contracted; yet, I own, I am rather inclined to believe his remaining single a fortunate circumstance. Nor have my fair readers any reason to be offended at the remark: great talents, even in a generous and benevolent mind, are sometimes attended with a certain want of pliability, which is ill suited to the cordialities of domestic life. A man of such a disposition as Mr. *Umphraville* has now acquired, might consider the delicacy, the vivacity, and the fine shades of female character, as frivolous, and beneath attention; or, at least, might be unable, for any length of time, to receive pleasure from those indulgencies, which minds of a softer mould may regard as the great and amiable perfection of what Mr. *Pope* calls

'*The last best work of Heaven.*'

With all those respectable talents which Mr. *Umphraville* possesses, with all that generosity of sentiment, and goodness of heart, so conspicuous in every thing he says or does, which so strongly endear him to his friends, I am apt to think, that, in the very

intimate connection of the married life, the woman of delicacy and sensibility might often feel herself hurt by the peculiarities of character to which he is subject.

The situation of a *wife* is, in this respect, very different from that of a *sister*. Miss *Umphraville*'s observation of her brother's peculiarities, neither lessens her esteem nor her affection for him; these peculiarities serve only to increase her attention to him, and to make her more solicitous to prevent their effects. But in that still closer connection which subsists between husband and wife, while the perception of his weakness might not have lessened the wife's affection, it might have given her a distress which a sister will not be apt to feel: a sister may observe the weaknesses of a brother without a blush, and endeavour to correct them without being hurt; a wife might be able to do neither.

These views which I have given of Mr. *Umphraville* and his family, may, perhaps, appear tedious to my readers. In giving this detail, I am afraid I have not sufficiently remembered, that, as they have not the same intimate acquaintance with that gentleman which I have, they will not feel the same interest in what relates to him.

L S

N° 20. SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1779.

Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?

VIRG.

While so many subjects of contention occupy the votaries of business and ambition, and prove the

source of discord, envy, jealousy, and rivalship, among mankind, one would be apt to imagine, that the pursuits and employments of studious and literary men would be carried on with calmness, good temper, and tranquillity. The philosophic sage, retired from the world, who hath truth for the object of his inquiries, might be willing, it were natural to suppose, to give up his own system, when he found it at variance with truth, and would never quarrel with another for adopting a different one; and the man of elegance and taste, who has literary entertainment in view, would not, one should think, find fault with the like amusements of other men, or dispute, with rancour or heat, upon mere matters of taste. But the fact has been otherwise: the disputes among the learned have, in every age, been carried on with the utmost virulence; and men, pretending to taste, have railed at each other with unparalleled abuse. Possibly the abstraction from the world, in which the philosopher lives, may render him more impatient of contradiction than those who mix oftener with common societies; and perhaps that fineness and delicacy of perception which the man of taste acquires, may be more liable to irritation than the coarser feelings of minds less cultivated and improved.

I have been led into these remarks by a conversation at which I happened lately to be present. Last week, having left with my Editor materials for my next paper, I went to the country for a few days, to pay a visit to a friend, whose real name I shall conceal under that of *Sylvester*. *Sylvester*, when a young man, had retired to the country, and having succeeded to a paternal estate, which was sufficient for all his wants, had lived almost constantly at home. His time was spent chiefly in study, and he had published some performances which did honour to his

genius and his knowledge. During all this time, *Sylvester* was the regular correspondent of a gentleman whom I shall here call *Alcander*, whose taste and pursuits were in many respects similar to his own. *Alcander*, though he was not an author like *Sylvester*, had from nature a very delicate taste, which had been much improved by culture. From a variety of accidents the two friends had not met for a great number of years; but while I was at *Sylvester*'s house, he received a letter from *Alcander*, notifying that gentleman's being on his way to visit him; and soon after he arrived accordingly.

It is not easy to describe the pleasure which the two friends felt at meeting. After the first salutations, their discourse took a literary turn. I was delighted, as well as instructed, with the remarks which were made upon men and books, by two persons of extensive information and accomplished taste; and the warmth with which they made them, added a relish to their observations. The conversation lasted till it was very late, when my host and his friend retired to their apartments, much pleased with each other, and in full expectation of additional entertainment from a continuation of such intercourse at the return of a new day.

Next morning, after breakfast, their literary discourse was resumed. It turned on a comparison of the different genius and merit of the *French* and *English* authors. *Sylvester* said, he thought there was a power of reasoning, a strength of genius, and a depth of reflection in the *English* authors, of which the *French*, in general, were incapable; and that, in his opinion, the preference lay greatly on the side of the writers of our own country. *Alcander* begged leave to differ from him; he admitted there was an appearance of depth in many of the English authors, but he said it was false and hollow. He maintained,

that the seeking after something profound, had led into many useless metaphysical disquisitions, in which the writer had no real merit, nor could the reader find any real advantage. But the *French* authors, he said, excelled in remarks on life and character, which, as they were founded on actual observation, might be attended with much utility, and as they were expressed in the liveliest manner, could not fail to give the highest entertainment. *Alcander*, in the course of his argument, endeavoured to illustrate it by a comparison of some of the most distinguished authors of both countries. *Sylvester*, finding those writers, whom he had studied with attention, and imitated with success, so warmly attacked, replied with some heat, as if he thought it tended to the disparagement of his own compositions. *Sylvester* said something about *French* frivolity; and *Alcander* replied with a sarcasm on metaphysical absurdity.

Finding the conversation take this unlucky turn, I endeavoured to change the subject; and from the comparison of the *English* and *French* authors, took occasion to mention that period of *English* literature, which has been frequently termed the *Augustan* age of *England*, when that *constellation* of wits appeared which illuminated the reign of *Queen Anne*.

But this subject of conversation was as unfortunate as the former. *Sylvester* is a professed admirer of *Swift*, to whom his attachment is perhaps heightened by a little *Toryism* in his political principles. *Alcander* is a keen *Whig*, and as great an admirer of *Addison*. As the conversation had grown rather warm on a general comparison of the authors of one country with those of another, so its warmth was much greater when the comparison was made of two particular favourite authors. *Sylvester* talked of the strength, the dignity, the forcible observation, and

the wit of *Swift*; *Alcander*, of the ease, the gracefulness, the native and agreeable humour of *Addison*. From remarks upon their writings, they went to their characters. *Sylvester* spoke in praise of openness and spirit, and threw out something against envy, jealousy, and meanness. *Alcander* inveighed against pride and ill-nature, and pronounced an eulogium on elegance, philanthropy, and gentleness of manners. *Sylvester* spoke as if he thought no man of a candid and generous mind could be a lover of *Addison*; *Alcander*, as if none but a severe and ill tempered one could endure *Swift*.

The spirits of the two friends were now heated to a violent degree, and not a little rankled at each other. I endeavoured again to give the discourse a new direction, and, as if accidentally, introduced something about *the Epistles of Phalaris*. I knew both gentlemen were masters of the dispute upon that subject, which has so much divided the learned, and I thought a dry question of this sort could not possibly interest them too much. But in this I was mistaken. *Sylvester* and *Alcander* took different sides upon this subject, as they had done upon the former, and supported their opinions with no less warmth than before. Each of them catched fire from every thing his opponent said, as if neither could think well of the judgment of that man who was of an opinion different from his own.

With this last debate the conversation ended. At our meeting next day, a formal politeness took place between *Sylvester* and *Alcander*, very different from that openness and cordiality of manner which they shewed at their first meeting. The last, soon after, took his departure; and, I believe, neither of them felt that respect for each other's understanding, nor that warmth of affection, which they entertained before this visit.

Alas! the two friends did not consider that it was equally owing to the fault of each that their friendship was thus changed into coldness. Both attached to the same pursuits, and accustomed to indulge them chiefly in seclusion and solitude, they had been too little accustomed to bear contradiction. This impatience of contradiction had not been corrected in either, by attention to the feelings or views of others; and the warmth which each felt in supporting his own particular opinion, prevented him from giving the proper indulgence to a diversity of opinion in the other.

N° 21. TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 1779.

This day's paper I devote to Correspondents. The first of the two letters it contains was brought to my Editor by a spruce footman, who, upon being asked whence he came, replied, from Mrs. *Meekly*'s.

To the Author of the Mirror.

SIR,

The world has, at different periods, been afflicted with diseases peculiar to the times in which they appeared, and the *Faculty* have, with great ingenuity, contrived certain generic names, by which they might be distinguished, it being a quality of great use and comfort in a physician to be able to tell precisely of what disorder his patient is likely to die. The *nervous* seems to be the ailment in greatest vogue at

present; a species of disease, which I am apt to consider as not the less *terrible* for being less *mortal* than many others. I speak not from personal experience, Mr. MIRROR; my own constitution, thank God! is pretty robust; but I have the misfortune to be afflicted with a *nervous wife*.

It is impossible to enumerate a twentieth part of the symptoms of this lamentable disorder, or of the circumstances by which its paroxysms are excited or increased. Its dependance on the natural phænomena of the *wind* and *weather*, on the temperature of the air, whether hot or cold, moist or dry, might be accounted for; and my wife would then be in no worse situation than the lady in a red cap and green jacket, whose figure I have seen in the little *Dutch* barometers, known by the name of *Babyhouses*. But, beside feeling the impression of those particulars, her disorder is brought on by incidents still more frequent, and less easy to be foreseen, than even the occasional changes in our atmosphere. A person running hastily up or down stairs, shutting a door roughly, placing the tongs on the left side of the grate, and the poker on the right, setting the china figures on the mantle-piece a little awry, or allowing the tossel of the bell-string to swing but for a moment; any of those little accidents has an immediate and irresistible effect on the nervous system of my wife, and produces symptoms, sometimes of languor, sometimes of irritation, which I her husband, my three children by a former marriage, and the other members of our family, equally feel and regret. The above causes of her distemper a very attentive and diligent discharge of our several duties might possibly prevent; but even our involuntary actions are apt to produce effects of a similar or more violent nature. It was but the other day she told my boy *Dick* he eat his pudding so voraciously, as almost to

make her faint, and remonstrated against my *sneezing* in the manner I did, which, she said, tore her poor *nerves* in pieces.

One thing I have observed peculiar to this disorder, which those conversant in the nature of sympathetic affections may be able to explain. It is not always produced by exactly similar causes, if such causes exist in dissimilar situations. I have known my wife *squeezed* for hours in a *side-box*, *dance* a whole night at a *ball*, have my Lord —— talking as fast and as *loud* to her as was possible there, and her nose assailed by the *stink* of a whole row of flambeaux, at going in and coming out, without feeling her *nerves* in the smallest degree affected; yet, the very day after, at home, she could not bear my chair, or the chair of one of the children, to come within several feet of her's; walking up stairs perfectly overcame her; none of us durst talk but in whispers; and the smell of my buttered roll made her sick to death.

As I reckon your paper a proper record for singular cases, and intolerable grievances of every sort, I send the above for your insertion, stating it according to its nature, in terms as physically descriptive as my little acquaintance with the healing art can supply.

I am, &c.

JOSEPH MEEKLY.

This Correspondent, as far as his wife's case falls within the department of the *physician*, I must refer to my very learned friends Doctors *Cullen* and *Monro*, who upon being *properly attended*, will give him, I am persuaded, as sound advice as it is in the power of medical skill to suggest. In point of *prudence*, to which only my prescriptions apply, I can advise nothing so proper for Mr. *Meekly* himself, as to

imitate the conduct of the *husband* of that little lady he describes, the mistress of the *Dutch baby-house*; between whom and his wife, tho' there subsists a very intimate connection, there is yet a contract of a particular kind; whenever the *gentleman* is at home, the *lady* is abroad, and *vice versa*. In their house, indeed, I do not observe any *children*; from which I conclude, that they have all been sent to the academy and the boarding-school.

I

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

To reconcile man to man, has been one of the great objects of moralists. They tell us, 'that men have 'one common original, and why should relations 'quarrel?' but then a petulant wit interposes, and observes that the original is not near enough to form a strong connection; and if the modern theory of volcanos be true, the original is so very distant as not to form any sensible connection at all. The Duke of Aremberg and Sir Thomas Urquhart may count kindred with the antediluvians; for the former has such a pedigree preserved at his castle at Hainault, and the latter has set forth his in print; but there are few genealogies so complete

We are next told, 'that all men are engaged in 'one common journey through life, and why should 'they quarrel on the road?' The answer is but too obvious—we do not quarrel merely for the sake of quarrelling; but as we have opportunity, we take the road, and oblige others, for our conveniency, to yield it; while eagerly galloping to the next stage, we *bespatter* those who are in our way; we send a servant before to bespeak the best beds at the inn, and the choice of the larder; and we make ourselves

as important and as troublesome as we can, merely for our own convenience; nay, we bribe a waiter to give us all his attendance, and to let the other passengers ring till their arms ache; but it is all to render ourselves as easy as possible.

The last consideration is, 'that we are all hastening to one common grave, and why should we 'quarrel *now*, since our quarrels must be *soon* at an 'end?' This proves that our disputes *must* be short, not that they *may* not be sharp.

I remember to have read somewhere of a people, I think to the north-west of Hungary, who had a name in their own language, which answers nearly to our word *brothers*, and who prided themselves, for a while, in that whimsical appellation. Their tenets were simple and full of benevolence, and, in general, so plain, that those who heard them for the first time, imagined that they had been previously acquainted with them. The men of whom I speak, could not have any *long contests*, for they were all hastening to the common goal of mortality, yet their disputes, although *short*, were *sharp*; early did they begin to *bite*, and, as soon as they gained strength, they *devoured* each other, if the expression may be allowed. According to the Scottish phrase, 'they 'quarrelled about the turning of a straw;' they vexed, tormented, and proscribed each other; nay, some assert that they cut throats; but still they declared that they meant nothing personal, and, for a long while, they still retained the name of *brothers*.

If that singular people, so full of benevolence, quarrelled incessantly for any cause, or for no cause, how can it be expected that *we* should walk through life to the grave with the calm and inoffensive solemnity of mourners at an interment, especially when so few of us have time to bestow our thoughts on the grave and its consequences?

It is impossible to reconcile man to man; but it is possible to bring individuals of the human race to a better understanding with each other.

I might dilate this proposition in a feigned tale, or obscure it by an allegory; but I rather chuse to prove it in the course of a simple narrative of matter of fact.

While the Duchess of Marlborough enjoyed power little short of sovereign, she frequently felt the satirical lashes of Dr. Swift; and, when disgraced, she could not but remember them; for she had a quick sense of injuries, and her nature was not much inclined to forgiveness.

Thwarted ambition, great wealth, and increasing years, rendered her more and more peevish: she hated courts over which she had no influence, and she became at length the most ferocious animal that is suffered to go loose, a violent *party-woman*.

Every one knows, that as her Grace was obliged to descend from the highest round of the ladder of ambition, so the Doctor was not allowed to mount the first step; and his disappointment produced the like effects on him, as lost empire had done on her.

Yet the Duchess of Marlborough became the passionate admirer of her satirist, and was even willing to forgive him. The perusal of *Gulliver's Travels* produced thi moral revolution in her sentiments; and that which debased the author in the opinion of many of his friends, exalted him in the opinion of the Duchess of Marlborough.

There are now lying before me some original letters of that celebrated lady. 'Dean Swift,' says she, 'gives the most exact account of kings, ministers, bishops, and the courts of justice, that is possible to be writ.—I could not help wishing, since I read his books, that we had had his assistance in the opposition—for I could easily forgive him all

'the slaps he has given me and the Duke of Marl-'borough, and have thanked him heartily whenever 'he would please to do good.'

In another letter she says, 'I most heartily wish 'that in this park I had some of the breed of those 'charming creatures Swift speaks of, and calls the '*Houyhnhnms*, which I understand to be *horses*, so 'extremely polite, and which had all manner of good 'conversation and good principles, and that never 'told a lie, and charmed him so that he could not 'endure his own country when he returned: he says 'there is a sort of creature there called *yahoos*, and 'of the same species with us, only a good deal uglier, 'but they are kept tied up, and by that glorious 'creature the horses, are not permitted to do any 'mischief. You will think that I am *distracted* 'with Dean Swift, but I really have not been pleased 'so much a long time as with what he writes, and 'therefore I will end with one of his sentences, *that* '*he mortally hates kings and ministers*.'

Thus the Duchess 'became distracted with Dean 'Swift;' and, on account of his libel against human nature, 'graciously pardoned his libels against her 'own sacred person.'

But Dr. Swift knew not her favourable opinion of him; for he left in manuscript a severer invective against her than any that he had published in his lifetime. Pity that for want of information, the misunderstanding should still have subsisted on his part! the good offices of a friend might easily have reconciled two persons so much connected with each other by the common ties of misanthropy.

I am, &c.

ADELUS.

N° 22. SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1779.

Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare.

HOR.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

YOUR MIRROR, it seems, possesses uncommon virtues, and you generously hold it out to the Public, that we may dress our characters at it. I trust it is, at least, a faithful glass, and will give a just representation of those lurking imperfections or excellencies which we distinguish with difficulty, or sometimes altogether overlook. I struggle, therefore, to get forward in the crowd, and to set before your moral MIRROR a personage who has long embarrassed me.

The observation of character, when I first looked beyond a college for happiness, formed not only my amusement, but, for some years, my favourite study. I had been so fortunate as early to imbibe strict notions of morality and religion, and to arrive at manhood in perfect ignorance of vicious pleasure. My heart was, therefore, led to place its hopes of happiness in love and friendship: but books had taught me to dread misplacing my affections. On this account, anxious to gratify the *soif d'aimer* that engrossed me, I bent the whole of my little talents to discern the characters of my acquaintance; and, blending sentiments of religion with high notions of moral excellence, and the refined intercourse of cul-

tivated minds, I fondly hoped, that, where I once formed an attachment, it would last for ever.

In this state of mind I became acquainted with Cleone. She was young and beautiful, but without that dimpling play of features which indicates, in some women, a mind of extreme sensibility. Her eye bespoke good sense, and was sometimes lighted up with vivacity, but never sparkled with the keenness of unrestrained joy, nor melted with the suffusion of indulged sorrow. Her manner and address had no tendency to familiarity; it was genteel, rather than graceful. Her voice in conversation was suited to her manner; it possessed those level tones which never offend, but seldom give pleasure, and seldomer emotion.

Her conversation was plain and sensible. Never attempting wit or humour, she contented herself with expressing, in correct and unaffected language, just sentiments on manners, and on works of taste: and the genius she displayed in compositions becoming her sex, and the propriety of her own conduct, did honour to her criticisms. She sung with uncommon excellence. Her voice seemed to unfold itself in singing, to suit every musical expression, and to assume every tone of passion she wished to utter. I never felt the power of simple melody in agitating, affecting, and pleasing, more strongly than from her performance.

In company she was attentive, *prevenante*, but not insinuating; and though she seemed to court the society of men of letters and taste, and to profess having intimate friendships with some individuals among them, I never could perceive that she was subject to the common weakness of making a parade of this kind of intercourse.

Most people would suppose that I had found, in

Cleone, the friend I was seeking; for both of us knew we could never be nearer than friends to each other, and she treated me with some distinction. I found it, however, impossible to know her so well as to place in her the complete confidence essential to friendship. The minutest attention to every circumstance in her appearance and behaviour, and studying her for years in all the little varieties of situation that an intimate acquaintance gave access to observe, proved unequal to discover, with certainty, the genuine character of her disposition or temper. No caprice betrayed her: no predominant shade could be marked in her tears, in her laugh, or in her smiles. Sometimes, however, I have thought she breathed a softness of soul that tempted me to believe her generous; but, when I considered a little, the inner recesses of her heart appeared still shut against the observer; and I well knew, that even poignant sensibility is not inconsistent with predominant selfishness.

When contemplating Cleone, I have often thought of that beautiful trait in the description of Petrach's Laura: 'Il lampeggiar dell' angelico riso*.' These flashes of affection breaking from the soul, alone display the truth, generosity, and tenderness, that deserve a friend. These gleams from the heart show us all its intricacies, its weakness, and its vigour, and expose it naked and undisguised to the spectator. A single minute will, in this way, give more knowledge of a character, and justly, therefore attract more confidence, than twenty years experience of refinement of taste and propriety of conduct.

I am willing to believe it was some error in education which had wrapt up Cleone's character in so much obscurity, and not any natural defect that ren-

* The lightning of her angel smile.

dered it prudent to be invisible. If there is an error of this kind, I hope your Mirror will expose it, and prevent it from robbing superior minds of their best reward—the confidence of each other.

In the present state of society, we have few opportunities of exhibiting our true characters by our actions; and the habits of the world soon throw upon our manners a veil that is impenetrable to others, and nearly so to ourselves. Hence the only period when we can form friendships is a few years in youth; for there is a reserve in the deportment, and a certain selfishness in the occupations of manhood, unfavourable to the forming of warm attachments. It is therefore, fatal to the very source of friendship, if, when yet children, we are to be prematurely bedaubed with the varnish of the world. And yet, I fear, this is the necessary effect of modern education.

In place of cherishing the amiable simplicity and frankness of children, every emanation of the heart is checked by the constant restraints, dissimulation, and frivolous forms of fashionable address, with which we harass them. Hence they are nearly the same at fourteen as at five-and-twenty, when, after a youth spent in joyless dissipation, they enter life, slaves to selfish appetites and reigning prejudices, and devoid of that virtuous energy of soul, which strong attachments, and the habits of deserved confidence, inspire. Even those who, like Cleone, possess minds superior to the common mould, though they cultivate their talents with success, and, in some measure, educate themselves anew, find it impossible to get rid entirely of that artificial manner, and those habits of restraint, with which they had been so early imbued.

Thus, like French taylors and dancing-masters, pretending to add grace and ornament to nature,

we constrain, distort, and incumber her; whereas the education of a polished age should, like the drapery of a fine statue or portrait, confer decency, propriety, and elegance, and gracefully veil, but by no means conceal, the beautiful forms of nature.

LÆLIUS.

N° 23. TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 1779.

Et isti
Errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum.
HOR.

I WAS lately applied to by a friend, in behalf of a gentleman, who, he said, had been unfortunate in life, to whom he was desirous of doing a particular piece of service, in which he thought my assistance might be useful: 'Poor fellow!' said he, 'I wish 'to serve him, because I always knew him, dissipa-'ted and thoughtless as he was, to be a *good-hearted* 'man, guilty of many imprudent things, indeed, 'but without meaning any harm! In short, *no one's* 'enemy but his own.'

I afterwards learned more particularly the circumstances of this gentleman's life and conversation, which I will take the liberty of laying before my readers, in order to show them what they are to understand by the terms used by my friend, terms which, I believe, he was nowise singular in using.

The person, whose interests he espoused, was heir to a very considerable estate. He lost his father

when an infant; and being, unfortunately, an only son, was too much the darling of his mother ever to be contradicted. During his childhood he was not suffered to play with his equals, because he was to be the king of all sports, and to be allowed a sovereign and arbitrary dominion over the persons and properties of his play-fellows. At school he was attended by a servant, who helped him to *thrash* boys who were too strong to be thrashed by himself; and had a tutor at home, who translated the Latin which was too hard for him to translate. At college he began to assume the *man*, by treating at taverns, making parties to the country, filling his tutor drunk, and hiring blackguards to break the windows of the Professor with whom he was boarded. He took in succession the *degrees* of a *wag*, a *pickle*, and a *lad of mettle*. For a while, having made an elopement with his mother's maid, and fathered three children of other people, he got the appellation of a *dissipated dog*; but, at last, betaking himself entirely to the bottle, and growing red-faced and fat, he obtained the denomination of an *honest fellow*; which title he continued to enjoy as long as he had money to pay, or indeed much longer, while he had credit to score for his reckoning.

During this last part of his progress, he married a poor girl, whom her father, from a mistaken idea of his fortune, forced to sacrifice herself to his wishes. After a very short space, he grew too indifferent about her to use her ill, and broke her heart with the best-natured neglect in the world. Of two children whom he had by her, one died at nurse soon after the death of its mother; the eldest, a boy of spirit like his father, after twice running away from school, was at last sent aboard a *Guinea-man*, and was knocked on the head by a sailor, in a quarrel about a Negro wench, on the coast of Africa.

Generosity, however, was a part of his character, which he never forfeited. Beside lending money genteelly to many worthless companions, and becoming surety for every man who asked him, he did *some* truly charitable actions to very deserving objects. These were told to his honour; and people who had met with refusals from more considerate men, spoke of such actions as the genuine test of feeling and humanity. They misinterpreted scripture for indulgence to his errors on account of his *charity*, and extolled the goodness of his heart in every company where he was mentioned. Even while his mother, during her last illness, was obliged to accept of money from her physician, because she could not obtain payment of her jointure, and while, after her decease, his two sisters were dunning him every day, without effect, for the small annuity left them by their father, he was called a *good-hearted* man by three-fourths of his acquaintance; and when, after having pawned their clothes, rather than distress him, those sisters commenced a law-suit to force him to do them justice, the same impartial judges pronounced them *hard-hearted* and *unnatural:* nay, the story is still told to their prejudice, though they now prevent their brother from starving, out of the profits of a little shop which they were then obliged to set up for their support.

The abuse of the terms used by my friend, in regard to the character of this unfortunate man, would be sufficiently striking from the relation I have given, without the necessity of my offering any comment on it. Yet the misapplication of them is a thousand times repeated by people who have known and felt instances, equally glaring, of such injustice. It may seem invidious to lessen the praises of any praiseworthy quality; but it is essential to the interests of virtue, that *insensibility* should not be allowed to as-

sume the title of *good-nature*, nor *profusion* to usurp the honours of *generosity*.

The effect of such misplaced and ill-founded indulgence is hurtful in a double degree. It encourages the evil which it forbears to censure, and discourages the good qualities which are found in men of decent and sober characters. If we look into the private histories of unfortunate families, we shall find most of their calamities to have proceeded from a neglect of the useful duties of sobriety, œconomy, and attention to domestic concerns, which, though they shine not in the eye of the world, nay, are often subject to its obloquy, are yet the surest guardians of virtue, of honour, and of independence.

Be just before you are generous, is a good old proverb, which the profligate hero of a much-admired comedy is made to ridicule, in a well-turned, and even a sentimental period. But what right have those squanderers of their own and other men's fortunes to assume the merit of *generosity?* Is parting with that money, which they value so little, *generosity?* Let them restrain their dissipation, their riot, their debauchery, when they are told that these bring ruin on the persons and families of the honest and the industrious; let them sacrifice one pleasure to humanity, and then tell us of their *generosity* and their *feeling*. A transient instance, in which the prodigal relieved want with his purse, or the thoughtless debauchee promoted merit by his interest, no more deserves the appellation of *generosity*, than the rashness of a *drunkard* is entitled to the praises of *valour*, or the freaks of a *madman* to the laurels of *genius*.

In the character of a man, considered as a being of any respect at all, we immediately see a relation to his friends, his neighbours, and his country. His duties only confer real *dignity*, and, what may not be so easily allowed, but is equally true, can bestow

real *pleasure*. I know not an animal more insignificant, or less happy, than a man without any ties of affection, or any exercise of duty. He must be very forlorn, or very despicable, indeed, to whom it is possible to apply the phrase used by my friend, in characterizing the person whose story I have related above, and to say, that he is *no one's enemy but his own*.

V

N° 24. SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1779.

Non satis est pulchra esse poëmata ; dulcia sunto.

HOR.

NATURE is for ever before us. We can, as often as we please, contemplate the variety of her productions, and feel the power of her beauty. We may feast our imaginations with the verdure of waving groves, the diversified colours of an evening sky, or the windings of a limpid river. We may dwell with rapture on those more sublime exhibitions of nature, the raging tempest, the billowy deep, or the stupendous precipice, that lift the soul with delightful amazement, and seem almost to suspend her exertions. These beautiful and vast appearances are so capable of affording pleasure, that they become favourite subjects with the poet and the painter; they charm us in description, or they glow upon canvas. Indeed, the imitations of eminent artists have been held on an equal footing, in regard to the pleasure they yield, with the works of Nature herself, and have

sometimes been deemed superior. This subject deserves attention; how it happens, that the descriptions of the poet, and the imitations of the painter, seem to communicate more delight than the things they describe or imitate.

In estimating the respective merits of nature and of art, it will readily be admitted, that the preference, in every single object, is due to the former. Take the simplest blossom that blows, observe its tints or its structure, and you will own them unrivalled. What pencil, how animated soever, can equal the glories of the sky at sun-set? or can the representations of moon-light, even by Homer, Milton, and Shakspeare, be more exquisitely finished than the real scenery of a moon-light night?

If the poet and painter are capable of yielding superior pleasure, in their exhibitions, to what we receive from the works of their great original, it is in the manner of grouping their objects, and by their skill in arrangement. In particular, they give uncommon delight, by attending not merely to unity of design, but to unity, if I may be allowed the expression, in the feelings they would excite. In the works of Nature, unless she has been ornamented and reformed by the taste of an ingenious improver, intentions of this sort are very seldom apparent. Objects that are gay, melancholy, solemn, tranquil, impetuous, and fantastic, are thrown together, without any regard to the influences of arrangement, or to the consistency of their effects on the mind. The elegant artist, on the contrary, though his works be adorned with unbounded variety, suggests only those objects that excite similar or kindred emotions, and excludes every thing of an opposite, or even of a different tendency. If the scene he describes be solemn, no lively nor fantastic image can have admission: but if, in a sprightly mood, he displays

scenes of festivity, every pensive and gloomy thought is debarred. Thus the figures he delineates have one undivided direction; they make one great and entire impression.

To illustrate this remark, let us observe the conduct of Milton in his two celebrated poems, *Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*.

In the *Allegro*, meaning to excite a cheerful mood, he suggests a variety of objects; for variety, by giving considerable exercise to the mind, and by not suffering it to rest long on the same appearance, occasions brisk and exhilarating emotions. Accordingly, the poet shews us, at one glance, and, as it were, with a single dash of his pen,

> Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
> Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
> Mountains, on whose barren breast
> The labouring clouds do often rest;
> Meadows trim with daisies pied,
> Shallow brooks and rivers wide.

The objects themselves are cheerful; for, besides having brooks, meadows, and flowers, we have the whistling plowman, the singing milk-maid, the mower whetting his scythe, and the shepherd piping beneath a shade. These images, so numerous, so various, and so cheerful, are animated by lively contrasts: we have the mountains opposed to the meadows, 'Shallow brooks and rivers wide.' Add to this, that the charms of the landscape are lightened by the bloom of a smiling season; and that the light poured upon the whole is the delightful radiance of a summer morning:

> Right against the eastern gate,
> Where the great Sun begins his state,
> Rob'd in flames of amber light,
> The clouds in thousand liv'ries dight.

Every image is lively; every thing different is withheld: all the emotions the poet excites are of one character and complexion.

Let us now observe the conduct of his *Il Penseroso*. This poem is, in every respect, an exact counterpart to the former. And the intention of the poet being to promote a serious and solemn mood, he removes every thing lively; 'Hence, vain deluding 'joys!' He quits society; he chuses silence, and opportunities for deep reflection; 'Some still re-'moved place will fit.' The objects he presents are few. In the quotation, beginning with 'Russet 'lawns,' there are are eight leading images: in the following, of equal length, there is only one.

> To behold the wandering moon,
> Riding near her highest noon,
> Like one that had been led astray
> Through the heav'n's wide pathless way;
> And oft, as if her head she bowed,
> Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

The sounds that can be, in any respect, agreeable to him, must correspond with his present humour; not the song of the milk-maid, but that of the nightingale; not the whistling plowman, but the sound of the curfeu. His images succeed one another slowly, without any rapid or abrupt transitions, without any enlivening contrasts; and he will have no other light for his landscape than that of the moon: or, if he cannot enjoy the scene without doors, he will have no other light within than that of dying embers, or of a solitary lamp at midnight. The times and the place he chuses for his retreat, are perfectly suited to his employment; for he is engaged in deep meditation, and in considering

> What worlds, or what vast regions hold
> Th' immortal mind.

Every image is solemn; every thing different is withheld: here, as before, all the emotions the poet excites are of one character and complexion. It is owing, in a great measure, to this attention in the writer, to preserve unity and consistency of sentiment, that, notwithstanding considerable imperfections in the language and versification, *Allegro* and *Ill Penseroso* have so many admirers.

The skill of the poet and painter, in forming their works so as to excite kindred and united emotions, deserves the greater attention, that persons of true taste are not so much affected, even in contemplating the beauties of nature, with the mere perception of external objects, as with the general influences of their union and correspondence. It is not that particular tree, or that cavern, or that cascade, which affords them all their enjoyment; they derive their chief pleasure from the united effect of the tree, the cavern, and the cascade. A person of sensibility will be less able, perhaps, than another, to give an exact account of the different parts of an exquisite landscape, of its length, width, and the number of objects it contains. Yet the general effect possesses him altogether, and produces in his mind very uncommon sensations. The impulse, however, is tender, and cannot be described. Indeed, it is the power of producing these sensations that gives the stamp of genuine excellence, in particular, to the works of the poet. Verses may be polished, and may glow with excellent imagery; but unless, like the poems of Parnel, or the lesser poems of Milton, they please by their enchanting influence on the heart, and, by exciting feelings that are consistent, or of a similar tendency, they are never truly delightful. Horace, I think, expresses this sentiment, when he says, in the words of my motto,

Non satis est pulchra esse poëmata ; dulcia sunto ;

and an attention to this circumstance is so important, that, along with some other exertions, it enables the poet and painter, at least, to rival the works of nature.

N° 25. TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1779.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

SOME time ago I troubled you with a letter, giving an account of a particular sort of grievance felt by the families of men of small fortunes, from their acquaintance with those of great ones. I am emboldened, by the favourable reception of my first letter, to write you a second upon the same subject.

You will remember, Sir, my account of a visit which my daughters paid to a great lady in our neighbourhood, and of the effects which that visit had upon them. I was beginning to hope that time, and the sobriety of manners which home exhibited, would restore them to their former situation, when, unfortunately, a circumstance happened, still more fatal to me than their expedition to ———. This, Sir, was the honour of a visit from the great lady in return.

I was just returning from the superintendence of my plows in a field I have lately inclosed, when I

was met, on the green before my door, by a gentleman (for such I took him to be) mounted upon a very handsome gelding, who asked me, by the appellation of *honest friend*, if this was not Mr. *Homespun*'s; and, in the same breath, whether the ladies were at home? I told him, my name was *Homespun*, the house was mine, and my wife and daughters were, I believed, within. Upon this, the young man, pulling off his hat, and begging my pardon for calling me *honest*, said, he was dispatched by Lady ———, with her compliments to Mrs. and Misses *Homespun*, and that, if convenient, she intended herself the honour of dining with them, on her return from B—— park (the seat of another great and rich lady in our neighbourhood).

I confess, Mr. MIRROR, I was struck somewhat of an heap with the message; and it would not, in all probability, have received an immediate answer, had it not been overheard by my eldest daughter, who had come to the window on the appearance of a stranger. 'Mr. *Papillot*,' said she immediately, 'I rejoice to see you; I hope your Lady and all the 'family are well.' 'Very much at your service, 'Ma'am.' he replied, with a low bow; 'my Lady 'sent me before, with the offer of her best compli-'ments, and that, if convenient'—and so forth, repeating his words to me. 'She does us infinite 'honour,' said my young Madam; 'let her Lady-'ship know how happy her visit will make us; but 'in the mean time, Mr. *Papillot*, give your horse to 'one of the servants, and come in and have a glass of 'something after your ride.' 'I am afraid,' answered he (pulling out his right-hand watch, for, would you believe it, Sir? the fellow had one in each fob), 'I shall hardly have time to meet my Lady at the 'place she appointed me.' On a second invitation, however, he dismounted, and went into the house,

leaving his horse to the care of the *servants*; but the *servants*, as my daughter very well knew, were all in the fields at work; so I, who have a liking for a good horse, and cannot bear to see him neglected, had the honour of putting Mr. *Papillot*'s in the stable myself.

After about an hour's stay, for the gentleman seemed to forget his hurry within doors, Mr. *Papillot* departed. My daughters, I mean the two polite ones, observed how handsome he was; and added another observation, that it was only to particular friends my Lady sent messages by him, who was her own body servant, and not accustomed to such offices. My wife seemed highly pleased with this last remark: I was about to be angry; but on such occasions it is not my way to say much; I generally shrug up my shoulders in silence; yet, as I said before, Mr. MIRROR, I would not have you think me hen-pecked.

By this time, every domestic about my house, male and female, were called from their several employments to assist in the preparations for her Ladyship's reception. It would tire you to enumerate the various shifts that were made, by purchasing, borrowing, &c. to furnish out a dinner suitable to the occasion. My little grey poney, which I keep for sending to market, broke his wind in the cause, and has never been good for any thing since.

Nor was there less ado in making ourselves and our attendants fit to appear before such company. The female part of the family managed the matter pretty easily; women, I observe, having a natural talent that way. My wife took upon herself the charge of apparelling me for the occasion. A laced suit, which I had worn at my marriage, was got up for the purpose; but the breeches burst a

seam at the very first attempt of pulling them on, and the sleeves of the coat were also impracticable; so she was forced to content herself with clothing me in my Sunday's coat and breeches, with the laced waistcoat of the above-mentioned suit, slit in the back, to set them off a little. My gardener, who has been accustomed, indeed, to serve in many capacities, had his head cropped, curled, and powdered, for the part of *butler;* one of the best-looking plowboys had a yellow cape clapped to his Sunday's coat to make him pass for a servant in livery; and we borrowed my son-in-law the parson's man for a third hand.

All this was accomplished, though not without some tumult and disorder, before the arrival of the great lady. She gave us, indeed, more time for the purpose than we looked for, as it was near six o'clock before she arrived. But this was productive of a misfortune on the other hand; the dinner my poor wife had bustled, sweated, and scolded for, was so over-boiled, over-stewed, and over-roasted, that it needed the appetite of so late an hour to make it go well down even with me, who am not very nice in these matters: luckily her Ladyship, as I am told, never eats much, for fear of spoiling her shape, now that small waists have come into fashion again.

The dinner, however, though spoiled in the cooking, was not thrown away, as her Ladyship's train made shift to eat the greatest part of it. When I say her *train*, I do not mean her servants only, of which there were half a dozen in livery, besides the illustrious Mr. *Papillot*, and her Ladyship's maid, gentlewoman I should say, who had a table to themselves. Her parlour attendants were equally numerous, consisting of two ladies and six gentlemen, who had accompanied her Ladyship in this excursion, and

did us the honour of coming to eat and drink with us, and bringing their servants to do the same, though we had never seen or heard of them before.

During the progress of this entertainment, there were several little embarrassments which might appear ridiculous in description, but were matters of serious distress to us. Soup was spilled, dishes overturned, and glasses broken, by the awkwardness of our attendants; and things were not a bit mended by my wife's solicitude (who, to do her justice, had all her eyes about her) to correct them.

From the time of her Ladyship's arrival, it was impossible that dinner could be over before it was dark; this, with the consideration of the bad road she had to pass through in her way to the next house she meant to visit, produced an invitation from my wife and daughters to pass the night with us; which, after a few words of apology for the trouble she gave us, and a few more of the honour we received, was agreed to. This gave rise to a new scene of preparation, rather more difficult than that before dinner. My wife and I were dislodged from our own apartment, to make room for our noble guest. Our four daughters were crammed in by us, and slept on the floor, that their rooms might be left for the two ladies and four of the gentlemen who were entitled to the greatest degree of respect; for the remaining two, we found beds at my son-in-law's. My two eldest daughters had, indeed, little time to sleep, being closetted the greatest part of the night with their right honourable visitor. My offices were turned topsy-turvy for the accommodation of the servants of my guests, and my own horses turned into the fields, that theirs might occupy my stable.

All these are hardships of their kind, Mr. Mirror, which the honour that accompanies them seems to me not fully to compensate; but these are slight

grievances, in comparison with what I have to complain of as the effects of this visit. The malady of my two eldest daughters is not only returned with increased violence upon them, but has now communicated itself to every other branch of my family. My wife, formerly a decent discreet woman, who liked her own way, indeed, but was a notable manager, now talks of this and that piece of expence as necessary to the rank of a gentlewoman, and has lately dropped some broad hints, that a winter in town is necessary to the accomplishment of one. My two younger daughters have got the *heads* that formerly belonged to their elder sisters, to each of whom, unfortunately, the great lady presented a set of feathers, for which new *heads* were essentially requisite.

The inside of all of them has undergone a very striking metamorphosis, from this one night's instruction of their visitor. There is, it seems, a fashion in *morality*, as well as in dress; and the present mode is not quite so strait-lac'd as the stays are. My two fine ladies talked, a few mornings ago, of such a gentleman's *connection* with Miss C——, and such another's *arrangement* with Lady G——, with all the ease in the world: yet these words I find, being interpreted, mean nothing less than *fornication* and *adultery*. I sometimes remonstrate warmly, especially when I have my son-in-law to back me, against these new-fangled freedoms; but another doctrine they have learned is, that a *father* and a *parson* may preach as they please, but are to be followed only according to the inclination of their audience. Indeed I could not help observing, that my Lady —— never mentioned her absent Lord (who, I understand, is seldom of her parties), except sometimes to let us know how much she differed in opinion from him.

This contempt of authority, and affectation of

fashion, has gone a step lower in my household. My gardener has tied his hair behind, and stolen my flour to powder it, ever since he saw Mr. *Papillot*; and yesterday he gave me warning that he should leave me next term, if I did not take him into the house, and provide another hand for the work in the garden. I found a great hoyden, who washes my daughters linens, sitting, the other afternoon, dressed in one of their cast fly-caps, entertaining this same oaf of a gardener, and the wives of two of my farm-servants, with tea, forsooth; and when I quarrelled with her for it, she replied, that Mrs. *Dimmity*, my Lady ———'s gentlewoman, told her all the maids at ——— had tea, and saw company of an afternoon.

But I am resolved on a reformation, Mr. MIRROR, and shall let my wife and daughters know, that I will be master of my own house and my own expences, and will neither be made a fool or a beggar, though it were after the manner of the greatest Lord in Christendom. Yet I confess I am always for trying gentle methods first. I beg, therefore, that you will insert this in your next paper, and add to it some exhortations of your own to prevail on them, if possible, to give over a behaviour, which I think, under favour, is rather improper even in *great folks*, but is certainly ruinous to little ones.

I am, &c.

JOHN HOMESPUN.

Mr. Homespun's relation, too valuable to be shortened, leaves me not room at present for any observations. But I have seen the change of manners among some of my countrywomen, for several years past, with the most sensible regret; and I intend soon to devote a paper to a serious remonstrance with them on the subject.

Z.

N° 26. SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 1779.

NOTHING can give a truer picture of the manners of any particular age, or point out more strongly those circumstances which distinguish it from others, than the change that takes place in the rules established as to the external conduct of men in society, or in what may be called the system of politeness.

It were absurd to say, that, from a man's external conduct, we are always to judge of the feelings of his mind; but, certainly, when there are rules laid down for men's external behaviour to one another, we may conclude, that there are some general feelings prevalent among the people which dictate those rules, and make a deviation from them to be considered as improper. When at any time, therefore, an alteration in those general rules takes place, it is reasonable to suppose that the change has been produced by some alteration in the feelings, and in the ideas of propriety and impropriety of the people.

Whoever considers the rules of external behaviour established about a century ago, must be convinced, that much less attention was then paid by men of high rank to the feelings of those beneath them, than in the present age. In that æra, a man used to measure out his complaisance to others according to the degree of rank in which they stood, compared with his own. A Peer had a certain manner of address and salutation to a Peer of equal rank, a different one to a Peer of an inferior order, and, to a

commoner, the mode of address was diversified according to the antiquity of his family, or the extent of his possessions; so that a stranger, who happened to be present at the levee of a great man, could, with tolerable certainty, by examining his features, or attending to the lowness of his bow, judge of the different degrees of dignity among his visitors.

Were it the purpose of the present paper, this might be traced back to a very remote period. By the *Earl of Northumberland's household book*, begun in the year 1512, it appears, that my Lord's *board-end*, that is to say, the end of the table where he and his principal guests were seated, was served with a different and more delicate sort of viands, than those allotted to the lower end. '*It is thought good*,' says that curious record, '*that no pluvers be brought at no time but only in Christmas, and principal feasts, and my Lord to be served therewith, and his board-end, and no other.*'—The line of distinction was marked by a large *Saltcellar*, placed in the middle of the table, above which, at *my Lord's board-end*, sat the distinguished guests, and below it those of an inferior class.

In this country, and in a period nearer our own times, we have heard of a Highland chieftain, who died not half a century ago, remarkable for his hospitality, and for having his table constantly crowded with a number of guests; possessing a high idea of the dignity of his family, and warmly attached to ancient manners, he was in use very nicely to discriminate, by his behaviour to them, the ranks of the different persons he entertained. The head of the table was occupied by himself, and the rest of the company sat nearer or more remote from him according to their respective ranks. All, indeed, were allowed to partake of the same *food*; but when the liquor was produced, which was, at that

time, and perhaps still is, in some parts of Scotland, accounted the principal part of a feast, a different sort of beverage was assigned to the guests, according to their different dignities. The chieftain himself, and his family, or near relations, drank wine of the best kind; to persons next in degree, was allotted wine of an inferior sort; and to guests of a still lower rank, were allowed only those liquors which were the natural produce of the country. This distinction was agreeable to the rules of politeness at that time established: the entertainer did not feel any thing disagreeable in making it; nor did any of the entertained think themselves entitled to take this *treatment amiss*.

It must be admitted, that a behaviour of this sort would not be consonant to the rules of politeness established in the present age. A man of good breeding now considers the same degree of attention to be due to every man in the rank of a gentleman, be his fortune, or the antiquity of his family, what it may; nay, a man of real politeness will feel it rather more incumbent on him to be attentive and complaisant to his inferiors in these respects, than to his equals. The idea which in modern times is entertained of politeness, points out such a conduct. It is founded on this, that a man of a cultivated mind is taught to feel a greater degree of pleasure in attending to the ease and happiness of people with whom he mixes in society, than in studying his own. On this account he gives up what would be agreeable to his own taste, because he finds more satisfaction in humouring the taste of others. Thus a gentleman now-a-days takes the lowest place at his own table; and, if there be any delicacy there, it is set apart for his guests. The entertainer finds a much more sensible pleasure in bestowing it on them, than in taking it to himself.

From the same cause, if a gentleman be in company with another, not so opulent as himself, or however worthy, not possessed of the same degree of those adventitious honours which are held in esteem by the world, politeness will teach the former to pay peculiar attention and observation to the latter. Men, even of the higheſt minds, when they are first introduced into company with their superiors in rank or fortune, are apt to feel a certain degree of awkwardness and uneasiness which it requires some time and habit to wear off. A man of fortune or of rank, if possessed of a sensible mind and real politeness, will feel, and be at particular pains to remove this. Hence he will be led to be rather more attentive to those who, in the eyes of the multitude, are reckoned his inferiors, than to others who are more upon a footing with him.

It is not proposed, in this paper, to inquire what are the causes of the difference of men's ideas, as to the rules of politeness in this and the former age. It is sufficient to observe, and the reflection is a very pleasant one, that the modern rules of good-breeding muſt give us a higher idea of the humanity and refinement of this age than of the former; and, though the mode of behaviour above mentioned may not be universally observed in practice, yet it is hoped it will not be disputed, that it is consonant to the rules which are now pretty generally established.

It ought, however, to be observed, that when we speak, even at this day, of good breeding, of politeness, of complaisance, these expressions are always confined to our behaviour towards those who are considered to be in the rank of gentlemen; but no system of politeness or of complaisance is established, at leaſt in this country, for our behaviour to those of a lower ſtation. The rules of good-breed-

ing do not extend to them; and he may be esteemed the best-bred man in the world who is a very brute to his servants and dependents.

This I cannot help considering as a matter of regret, and it were to be wished that the same humanity and refinement, which recommends an equal attention to all in the rank of gentlemen, would extend some degree of that attention to those who are in stations below them.

It will require but little observation to be satisfied, that all men, in whatever situation, are endowed with the same feelings (though education or example may give them a different modification); and that one in the lowest rank of life may be sensible of a piece of insolence, or an affront, as well as one in the highest. Nay, it ought to be considered, that the greater the disproportion of rank, the affront will be the more sensibly felt; the greater the distance from which it comes, and the more unable the person affronted to revenge it, by so much the heavier will it fall.

It is not meant, that in our transactions with men of a very low station, and who, from their circumstances, and the wants of society, must be employed in servile labour, we are to behave in all respects, as to those who are in the rank of gentlemen. The thing is impossible, and such men do not expect it. But in all our intercourse with them, we ought to consider that they are men possessed of like feelings with ourselves, which nature has given them, and which no situation can or ought to eradicate. When we employ them in the labour of life, it ought to be our study to demand that labour in the manner easiest to them: and we should never forget that gentleness is part of the *wages* we owe them for their service.

Yet how many men, in other respects of the best

and most respectable characters, are, from inadvertency, or the force of habit, deaf to those considerations! and, indeed, the thing has been so little attended to, that in this, which has been called a polite age, complaisance to servants and dependents is not, as I have already observed, at least in this country, considered as making any part of politeness.

But there is another set of persons still more exposed to be treated roughly than even domestic servants, and these are, the *waiters* at inns and taverns. Between a master and servant a certain connection subsists, which prevents the former from using the latter very ill. The servant, if he is good for any thing, naturally forms an attachment to his master, and to his interest, which produces a mutual intercourse of kindness between them. But no connection of this sort can be formed with the temporary attendants above mentioned. Hence the monstrous abuse which such persons frequently suffer; every traveller, and every man who enters a tavern, thinks he is entitled to vent his own ill-humour upon them, and vollies of curses are too often the only language they meet with.

Having mentioned the waiters in inns and taverns, I cannot avoid taking particular notice of the treatment to which those of the female sex, who are employed in places of that sort, are often exposed. Their situation is, indeed, peculiarly unfortunate. If a girl in an inn happen to be handsome, and a parcel of young thoughtless fellows cast their eyes upon her, she is immediately made the subject of taunt and merriment; coarse and indecent jokes are often uttered in her hearing, and conversation shocking to modest ears is frequently addressed to her. The poor girl, all the while, is at a loss how to behave; if she venture on a spirited answer, the probable consequence will be, to raise the mirth of the fa-

cetious company, and to expose her to a repetition of insults. If, guided by the feelings of modesty, she avoid the presence of the impertinent guests, she is complained of for neglecting her duty; she loses the little perquisite which, otherwise, she would be entitled to; perhaps disobliges her mistress, and loses her place. Whoever attends but for a moment to the case of a poor girl so situated, if he be not lost to all sense of virtue, must feel his heart relent at the cruelty of taking advantage of such a situation. But the misfortune is, that we seldom attend to such cases at all; we sometimes think of the fatigues and sufferings incident to the bodies of our inferiors; but we scarcely ever allow any sense of pain to their minds.

Among the *French*, whom we mimic in much *false* politeness, without learning from them, as we might do, much of the *true*, the observances of good-breeding are not confined merely to gentlemen, but extend to persons of the lowest ranks. Thus a *Frenchman* hardly ever addresses any man, however mean his condition, without calling him *Monsieur*, and the poorest woman in a country village is addressed by the appellation of *Madame*. The accosting, in this manner, people of so very low a rank, in the same terms with those so much their superiors, may perhaps appear extravagant; but the practice shews how much that refined and elegant people are attentive to the feelings of the meanest, when they have extended the rules and ceremonial of politeness even to them.

No 27. TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 1779.

There is a kind of mournful eloquence
In thy dumb grief, which foames all clamorous sorrow.

LEE'S THEODOSIUS.

A VERY amiable and much respected friend of mine, whose real name I shall conceal under that of *Wentworth*, had lately the misfortune of losing a wife, who was not only peculiarly beautiful, but whose soul was the mansion of every virtue, and of every elegant accomplishment. She was suddenly cut off in the flower of her age, after having lived twelve years with the best and most affectionate of husbands. A perfect similarity of temper and disposition, a kindred delicacy of taste and sentiment, had linked their hearts together in early youth, and each succeeding year seemed but to add new strength to their affection. Though possessed of an affluent fortune, they preferred the tranquillity of the country to all the gay pleasures of the capital. In the cultivation of their estate, in cherishing the virtuous industry of its inhabitants, in ornamenting a beautiful seat, in the society of one another, in the innocent prattle of their little children, and in the company of a few friends, Mr. *Wentworth* and his *Amelia* found every wish gratified, and their happiness complete.

My readers will judge then, what must have been Mr. *Wentworth*'s feelings, when *Amelia* was thus suddenly torn from him, in the very prime of her life, and in the midst of her felicity. I dreaded the effects of

it upon a mind of his nice and delicate sensibility; and, receiving a letter from his brother, requesting me to come to them, I hasted thither, to endeavour by my presence, to assuage his grief, and prevent those fatal consequences of which I was so apprehensive.

As I approached the house, the sight of all the well-known scenes brought fresh into my mind the remembrance of *Amelia*; and I felt myself but ill qualified to act the part of a comforter. When my carriage stopt at the gate, I trembled, and would have given the world to go back. A heart-felt sorrow sat on the countenance of every servant; and I walked into the house without a word being uttered. In the hall I was met by the old butler who has grown grey-headed in the family, and he hastened to conduct me up stairs. As I walked up, I commanded firmness enough to say, 'Well, William, how is Mr. Wentworth?' The old man, turning about with a look that pierced my heart, said, 'Oh Sir, our excellent Lady!'——Here his grief overwhelmed him; and it was with difficulty he was able to open to me the door of the apartment.

Mr. Wentworth ran and embraced me with the warmest affection; and, after a few moments, assumed a firmness, and even an ease, that surprised me. His brother, with a sister of Amelia's, and some other friends that were in the room, appeared more overpowered than my friend himself, who, by the fortitude of his behaviour, seemed rather to moderate the grief of those around him, than to demand their compassion for himself. By his gentle and kind attentions, he seemed anxious to relieve their sorrow; and, by a sort of concerted tranquillity, strove to prevent their discovering any symptoms of the bitter anguish which preyed upon his mind. His countenance was pale, and his eyes betrayed

that his heart was ill at ease; but it was that silent and majestic sorrow which commands our reverence and our admiration.

Next morning after breakfast, I chanced to take up a volume of Metastasio, that lay amongst other books upon a table; and, as I was turning over the leaves, a slip of paper, with something written on it, dropped upon the floor. Mr. Wentworth picked it up; and as he looked at it, I saw the tears start from his eyes, and, fetching a deep sigh, he uttered in a low and broken voice, '*My poor Amelia!*' – It was the translation of a favourite passage which she had been attempting, but had left unfinished. As if uneasy lest I had perceived his emotion, he carelessly threw his arm over my shoulder, and reading aloud a few lines of the page which I held open in my hand, he went into some remarks on the poetry of that elegant author. Some time after, I observed him take up the book, and carefully replacing the slip of paper where it had been, put the volume in his pocket.

Mr. Wentworth proposed that we should walk out, and that he himself would accompany us. As we stepped through the hall, one of my friend's youngest boys came running up, and catching his Papa by the hand, cried out with joy, that '*Mama's 'Rover was returned.*' This was a spaniel who had been the favourite of Amelia, and had followed her in all her walks; but after her death, had been sent to the house of a villager, to be out of the immediate sight of the family. Having somehow made its escape from thence, the dog had that morning found his way home; and, as soon as he saw Mr. Wentworth, leaped upon him with an excess of fondness. I saw my friend's lips and cheeks quiver. He catched his little Frank in his arms; and, for a few moments, hid his face in his neck.

As we traversed his delightful grounds, many different scenes naturally recalled the remembrance of Amelia. My friend, indeed, in order to avoid some of her favourite walks, had conducted us an unusual road; but what corner could be found that did not bear the traces of her hand? Her elegant taste had marked the peculiar beauty of each different scene, and had brought it forth to view with such a happy delicacy of art, as to make it seem the work of nature alone. As we crossed certain paths in the woods, and passed by some rustic buildings, I could sometimes discern an emotion in my friend's countenance; but he instantly stifled it with a firmness and dignity that made me careful not to seem to observe it.

Towards night, Mr. Wentworth having stolen out of the room, his brother and I stepped out to a terrace behind the house. It was the dusk of evening, the air was mild and serene, and the moon was rising in all her brightness from the cloud of the east. The fineness of the night made us extend our walk, and we strayed into a hollow valley, whose sides are covered with trees overhanging a brook that pours itself along over broken rocks. We approached a rustic grotto, placed in a sequestered corner, under a half impending rock. My companion stopped. 'This,' said he, 'was one of Ame-'lia's walks, and that grotto was her favourite eve-'ning retreat. The last night she ever walked out, 'and the very evening she caught that fatal fever, 'I was with my brother and her, while we sat and 'read to each other in that very place.' While he spoke, we perceived a man steal out of the grotto, and, avoiding us, take his way by a path through a thicket of trees on the other side. 'It is my brother,' said young Wentworth; 'he has been here in his

'Amelia's favourite grove, indulging that grief he 'so carefully conceals from us.'

We returned to the house, and found Mr. Wentworth with the rest of the company. He forced on some conversation, and even affected a degree of gentle pleasantry during the whole evening.

Such, in short, is the noble deportment of my friend, that, in place of finding it necessary to temper and moderate his grief, I must avoid seeming to perceive it, and dare scarcely appear even to think of the heavy calamity which has befallen him. I too well know what he feels; but the more I know this, the more does the dignity of his recollection and fortitude excite my admiration, and command my silent attention and respect.

How very different is this dignified and reserved sorrow, from that weak and teazing grief which disgusts, by its sighs and tears, and clamorous lamentations? How much does such noble fortitude of deportment call forth our regard and reverence? How much is a character in other respects estimable, degraded by a contrary demeanour? How much does the excessive, the importunate, and unmanly grief of *Cicero*, diminish the very high respect which we should otherwise entertain for the exalted character of that illustrious Roman?

Writers on practical morality have described and analyzed the passion of grief, and have pretended to prescribe remedies for restoring the mind to tranquillity; but, I believe, little benefit has been derived from any thing they have advised. To tell a person in grief, that time will relieve him, is truly applying no remedy; and to bid him reflect how many others there may be who are more wretched, is a very inefficacious one. The truth is, that the excess of this, as well as of other passions, must be prevented rather than cured. It must be obviated by

our attaining that evenness and equality of temper, which can arise only from an improved understanding, and an habitual intercourse with refined society. These will not, indeed, exempt us from the pangs of sorrow, but will enable us to bear them with a noble grace and propriety, and will render the presence of our friends (which is the only remedy) a very effectual cure.

This is well explained by a philosopher, who is no less eloquent than he is profound. He justly observes, that we naturally, on all occasions, endeavour to bring down our own passions, to that pitch which those about us can correspond with. We view ourselves in the light in which we think they view us, and seek to suit our behaviour to what we think their feelings can go along with. With an intimate friend, acquainted with every circumstance of our situation, we can, in some measure, give way to our grief, but are more calm than when by ourselves. Before a common acquaintance, we assume a greater sedateness. Before a mixed assembly, we affect a still more considerable degree of composure. Thus, by the company of our friends at first, and afterwards by mingling with society, we come to suit our deportment to what we think they will approve of; we gradually abate the violence of our passion, and restore our mind to its wonted tranquillity.

N° 28. SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1779.

Currit ad Indos,
Pauperiem fugiens. HOR.

'AND did you not blush for our countrymen?' said Mr. *Umphraville* to Colonel *Plum*, as the latter was describing the sack of an Indian city, and the plunder of its miserable inhabitants, with the death of a *Rajah* who had gallantly defended it.

'Not at all, Sir,' answered the Colonel coolly: 'our countrymen did no more than their duty; and 'were we to decline performing it on such occa'sions, we should be of little service to our country 'in India.'

Mr. *Umphraville* made no answer to this defence; but a silent indignation, which sat upon his countenance, implied a stronger disapprobation of it, than the most laboured reply he could have offered.

For the same reason which induced him to avoid any farther discussion of the subject, my friend endeavoured to give the conversation a different turn. He led the Colonel into a description of the country of India; and, as that gentleman described, in very lively colours, the beauty of its appearance, the number of its people, and the variety and richness of its productions, Mr. *Umphraville* listened to this part of his discourse with an uncommon degree of pleasure and attention.

But, after the Colonel's departure (for this conversation happened during one of my excursions to Mr. *Umphraville*'s, where Colonel *Plum* had been on a visit), the former part of the conversation recurred immediately to my friend's memory, and produced the following reflections.

'I know not,' said he, 'a more mortifying proof 'of human weakness, than that power which si-'tuation and habit acquire over principle and feel-'ing, even in men of the best natural dispositions.

'The gentleman who has just left us, has derived 'from Nature a more than ordinary degree of good 'sense. Nor does she seem to have been less liberal 'to him in the affections of the heart, than in the 'powers of the understanding.

'Since his return to this country, Colonel *Plum* 'has acted the part of an affectionate and generous 'relation, of an attentive and useful friend: he has 'been an indulgent landlord, a patron of the indus-'trious, and a support to the indigent. In a word, 'he has proved a worthy and useful member of so-'ciety, on whom fortune seems not to have misplaced 'her favours.

'Yet, with all the excellent dispositions of which 'these are proofs,—placed as a soldier of fortune in 'India; inflamed with the ambition of amassing 'wealth; corrupted by the contagious example of 'others, governed by the same passion, and engaged 'in the same pursuit, Colonel *Plum* appears to have 'been little under the influence either of justice or 'humanity; he seems to have viewed the unhappy 'people of that country merely as the instruments, 'which, in one way or other, were to furnish him-'self and his countrymen with that wealth they had 'gone so far in quest of.

'If these circumstances could operate so strongly 'on such a man as Colonel *Plum*, we have little 'reason to wonder that they should have carried 'others of our countrymen to still more lamentable 'excesses; that they should have filled that unhappy 'country with scenes of misery and oppression, of 'which the recital fills us with equal shame and 'indignation. Yet such examples as that of the 'Colonel should perhaps dispose us in place of vio-

'lently declaiming against the conduct of individu-
'als, to investigate the causes by which it is pro-
'duced.

'The conquests of a commercial people have al-
'ways, I believe, proved uncommonly destructive;
'and this might naturally have been expected of
'those made by our countrymen in India, under the
'direction of a mercantile society conducted by its
'members in a distant country, in a climate fatal
'to European constitutions, which they visit only for
'the purpose of suddenly amassing riches, and from
'which they are anxious to return as soon as that
'purpose is accomplished.

'How far such a company, whose original con-
'nection with India was merely the prosecution of
'their private commerce, should have ever been al-
'lowed to assume, and should still continue to
'possess, the unnatural character of sovereigns and
'conquerors; and to conduct the government of
'a great empire; is a point which may, perhaps,
'merit the attention of the legislature, as much as
'many of the more minute inquiries in which they
'have of late been engaged.

'I have often thought how much our superior
'knowledge in the art of government might enable
'us to change the condition of that unfortunate
'country for the better. I have pleased myself with
'fondly picturing out the progress of such a plan;
'with fancying I saw the followers of *Mahomet* lay
'aside their ferocity and ambition; the peaceful
'disciples of *Brahma*, happy in the security of a
'good government, and in the enjoyment of those
'innocent and simple manners which mark the in-
'fluence of a fruitful climate and a beneficent re-
'ligion.—But, alas!' continued Mr. *Umphraville*, with a sigh, 'such reformations are more easily ef-
'fected by me in my elbow-chair, than by those

'who conduct the great and complicated machine 'of government.

'I wish' added he, 'it may be only the con- 'tracted view of things natural to a retired old man, 'which leads me to fear that, in this country, the 'period of such reformations is nearly past; when I 'observe that almost all men regulate their conduct, 'and form the minds of the rising generation, by 'this maxim,

Quærenda pecunia primum est,
Virtus post Nummos;

'I cannot but apprehend, from the prevalence of so 'mean and so corrupt a principle, the same national 'corruption which the *Roman* poet ascribes to it.

'In the lower ranks, the desire of gain, as it is 'the source of industry, may be held equally con- 'ducive to private happiness and public prosperity; 'but those who, by birth or education, are destined 'for nobler pursuits, should be actuated by more 'generous passions. If from luxury, and the love of 'vain expence, they shall also give way to this desire 'of wealth; if it shall extinguish the sentiments of 'public virtue, and the passion for true glory, na- 'tural to that order of the state; the spring of 'private and of national honour must have lost its 'force, and there will remain nothing to withstand 'the general corruption of manners, and the public 'disorder and debility which are its inseparable 'attendants. If our country has not already reached 'this point of degeneracy, she seems, at least, as far 'as a spectator of her manners can judge, to be 'too fast approaching it.'

Somewhat in this manner did Mr. *Umphraville* express himself. Living retired in the country conversing with few, and ignorant of the opinions

of the many; attached to ideas of *family*, and not very fond of the mercantile interest; disposed to give praise to former times, and not to think highly of the present; in his apprehension of facts, he is often mistaken, and the conclusions he draws from those facts are often erroneous. In the present instance, the view which I have presented of his opinions, may throw further light upon his character; it gives a striking picture both of the candour of his mind, and of the generosity of his sentiments. His opinions, though erroneous, may be useful; they may remind those who, though endued, like Colonel *Plum*, with good dispositions, are in danger of being seduced by circumstances and situation, that our own interest or ambition is never to be pursued but in consistency with the sacred obligations of justice, humanity and benevolence; and they may afford a very pleasing source of reflection to others, who, in trying situations, have maintained their virtue and their character untainted.

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N° 29. TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1779.

Conciliat animos comitas affabilitasque sermonis.
CIC. DE OFF.

POLITENESS, or the external show of humanity has been strongly recommended by some, and has been treated with excessive ridicule by others. It has sometimes been represented, very improperly, as constituting the sum of merit: and thus affectation and grimace have been substituted in place of virtue. There are, on the other hand, persons who

cover their own rudeness, and justify gross rusticity, by calling their conduct honest bluntness, and by defaming complacent manners, as fawning or hypocritical. Shakspeare, in his *King Lear*, sketches this character with his usual ability :

> This is some fellow
> Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
> A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
> Quite from his nature. He can't flatter ; he,
> An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth,
> An' they will take it so ; if not, he's plain.

To extol polished external manners as constituting the whole duty of man, or to declaim against them as utterly inconsistent with truth, and the respect we owe to ourselves, are extremes equally to be avoided. Let no one believe that the shew of humanity is equal to the reality ; nor let any one, from the desire of pleasing, depart from the line of truth, or stoop to mean condescension. But to presume favourably of all men ; to consider them as worthy of our regard, till we have evidence of the contrary ; to be inclined to render them services ; and to entertain confidence in their inclinations to follow a similar conduct ; constitute a temper, which every man, for his own peace, and for the peace of society, ought to improve and exhibit. Now, this is the temper essential to polished manners ; and the external show of civilities is a banner held forth, announcing to all men, that we hold them in due respect, and are disposed to oblige them. Besides, it will often occur, that we may have the strongest conviction of worth in another person ; that we may be disposed, from gratitude or esteem, to render him suitable services ; and yet may have no opportunity of testifying, by those actions which are their genuine expressions, either that conviction, or that

disposition. Hence external courtesies and civilities are substituted, with great propriety, as signs and representatives of those actions which we are desirous, and have not the power of performing. They are to be held as pledges of our esteem and affection.

'But the man of courtly manners often puts on 'a placid and smiling semblance, while his heart 'rankles with malignant passions.'—When this is done with an intention to deceive or ensnare mankind, the conduct is perfidious, and ought to be branded with infamy. In that case, the law of courtesy is 'more honoured in the breach, than in 'the observance.' But there may be another situation, when the shew of courtesy assumed, while the heart is still at ease, moved by disagreeable unkindly feelings, would be unjustly censured.—From a feeble constitution of body, bad health, or some untoward accident or disappointment, you lose your wonted serenity. Influenced by your present humour, even to those who have no concern in the accident that hath befallen you, and who would really be inclined to relieve you from your uneasiness, you become reserved and splenetic. You know the impropriety of such a demeanour, and endeavour to beget in your bosom a very different disposition. Your passions, however, are stubborn; images of wrong and of disappointment have taken strong hold of your fancy; and your present disagreeable and painful state of mind cannot easily be removed. Meanwhile however, you disguise the appearance; you are careful to let no fretful expression be uttered, nor any malignant thought lour in your aspect; you perform external acts of civility, and assume the tones and the language of the most perfect composure. You thus war with your own spirit; and, by force of commanding the external symptoms, you

will gain a complete victory. You will actually establish in your mind that good humour and humanity, which, a little before, were only yours in appearance. Now, in this discipline, there is nothing criminal.—In this discipline there is a great deal of merit. It will not only correct and alter our present humours, but may influence our habits and dispositions.

A contrary practice may be attended, if not with dangerous, at least with disagreeable consequences. ——Sir *Gregory Blunt* was the eldest son of a respectable family. His fortune and his ancestry entitled him, as he and his friends apprehended, to appear in any shape that he pleased. He owed, and would owe, no man a shilling; but other men might be indebted to him. He received from nature, and still possesses, good abilities and humane dispositions. He is a man, too, of inflexible honour. Yet Sir *Gregory* has an unbending cast of mind, that cannot easily be fashioned into soft compliance and condescension. He never, even at an early period, had any pretensions to winning ways, or agreeable assiduities; nor had he any talent for acquiring personal graces and accomplishments. In every thing that confers the easy and engaging air of a gentleman, he was excelled by his companions. Sir *Gregory* had sense enough to perceive his own incapacity; vanity enough to be hurt with the preferences shown to young men less able or honest, but more complaisant than himself; and pride enough to cast away all pretensions to that smoothness of demeanour in which he could never excel. Thus he assumed a bluntness and roughness of manners, better suited to the natural cast of his temper. He would be plain; he hated all your smiling and fawning attentions; he would speak what he thought; he would praise no man, even though he thought him deserving, because

he scorned to appear a flatterer; and he would promise no man good offices, not even though he meant to perform them, because he abhorred ostentation. Accordingly, in his address, he is often abrupt, with an approach to rudeness, which, if it does not offend, disconcerts: and he will not return a civility, because he is not in the humour. He thus indulges a propensity which he ought to have corrected; and, slave to a surly vanity, he thinks he acts upon principle.

Now, this habit not only renders him disagreeable to persons of polished manners, but may be attended with consequences of a more serious nature. Sir *Gregory* does not perceive, that, while he thinks he is plain, he only *affects* to be plain; that he often stifles a kindly feeling, for fear of seeming complacent; that 'he constrains the garb quite from his 'nature;' and that he disguises his appearance as much at least by *excessive* bluntness, as he would by shewing *some* complaisance. Thus he is hardly entitled, notwithstanding his pretensions, to the praise even of *honest* plainness. Besides, his character, in other respects, is so eminent, and his rank so distinguished, that, of course, he has many admirers: and thus all the young men of his neighbourhood are becoming as boisterous and as rough as himself. Even some of his female acquaintance are likely to suffer by the contagion of his example. Their desire of pleasing has taken an improper direction; they seem less studious of those delicate proprieties and observances so essential to female excellence; they also will not appear otherwise than what they are; and thus they will not only appear, but become a great deal worse. For, as the show of humanity and good humour may, in some instances promote a gentle temper, and render us good-humoured; so the affectation and show of honest plainness may lead us to be plain

without honesty, and sincere without good intention. Those who affect timidity, may, in time, become cowards; and those who affect roughness, may, in time, grow inhuman.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

I HAVE long had a *tendre* for a young lady, who is very beautiful, but a little capricious. I think myself unfortunate enough not to be in her good graces; but some of my friends tell me I am a simpleton, and don't understand her. Pray be so kind as inform me, Mr. MIRROR, what sort of rudeness amounts to encouragement. When a lady calls a man impertinent, does she wish him to be somewhat more assuming? When she never looks his way, may he reckon himself a favourite? Or, if she tells every body, that Mr. *Such-a-one* is her aversion, is Mr. *Such-a-one* to take it for granted, that she is downright fond of him?

Yours respectfully,
MODESTUS.

V

N° 30. SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1779.

IT has sometimes been matter of speculation, whether or not there be a *sex* in the *soul*: that there is one in *manners*, I never heard disputed; the same

applause which we involuntarily bestow upon honour, courage, and spirit in *men*, we as naturally confer upon chastity, modesty, and gentleness in *women*.

It was formerly one of those national boasts which are always allowable, and sometimes useful, that the Ladies of *Scotland* possessed a purity of conduct, and delicacy of manners, beyond those of most other countries. Free from the bad effects of overgrown fortunes, and of the dissipated society of an overgrown capital, their beauty was natural and their minds were uncorrupted.

Though I am inclined to believe, that this is still the case in general; yet, from my own observation, and the complaints of several Correspondents, I am sorry to be obliged to conclude, that there begins to appear among us a very different style of manners. Perhaps our frequent communication with the metropolis of our sister kingdom, is one great cause of this. Formerly a *London* journey was attended with some difficulty and danger, and *posting* thither was an atchievement as masculine as a fox-chace. Now the goodness of the roads and the convenience of the vehicles render it a matter of only a few days moderate exercise for a lady; '*Facilis descensus Averni;*' our wives and daughters are carried thither to see the world; and we are not to wonder if some of them bring back only that knowledge of it, which the most ignorant can acquire, and the most forgetful retain. That knowledge is communicated to a certain circle, on their return; the imitation is as rapid as it is easy; they emulate the *English*, who before have copied the *French*; the dress, the phrase, and the *morale* of *Paris*, is transplanted first to *London*, and thence to *Edinburgh*; and even the sequestered regions of the country are sometimes visited in this northern progress of politeness.

And here I cannot help observing, that the imita-

tion is often so clumsy, as to leave out all the *agreeable*, and retain all the *offensive*. In the *translation* of the *manners*, as in the *translation* of the *language*, of our neighbours, we are apt to lose the finesses, the *petits agrémens*, which (I talk like a man of the world) give zest and value to the whole.

It will be said perhaps, that there is often a levity of behaviour without any criminality of conduct; that the lady who talks always loud, and sometimes free, goes much abroad, or keeps a crowd of company at home, rattles in a public place with a circle of young fellows, or flirts in a corner with a single one, does all this without the smallest bad intention, merely as she puts on a cap, and sticks it with feathers, because she has seen it done by others whose rank and fashion entitle them to her imitation. Now, granting that most of those ladies have all the purity of heart that is contended for, are there no disagreeable consequences, I would ask, from the appearance of evil, exclusive of its reality? Decorum is at least the *ensign*, if not the *outguard*, of virtue; the want of it, if it does not weaken the garrison, will, at least, embolden the assailants; and a woman's virtue is of so delicate a nature, that to be impregnable is not enough, without the reputation of being so.

But, though female *virtue*, in the *singular*, means *chastity*, there are many other endowments, without which a woman's character is reproachable, though it is not infamous. The mild demeanor, the modest deportment, are valued not only as they denote internal purity and innocence, but as forming in themselves the most amiable and engaging part of the female character. There was, of old, a stiff constrained manner, which the moderns finding unpleasant, agreed to explode, and, in the common rage of reformation, substituted the very opposite extreme in its stead; to banish preciseness, they called in le-

vity, and ceremony gave way to something like rudeness. But fashion may alter the form, not the essence of things; and though we may lend our laugh, or even our applause, to the woman whose figure and conversation comes flying out upon us in this fashionable forwardness of manner; yet, I believe, there is scarce a votary of the mode who would wish his sister, his wife, or even his mistress (I use the word in its modest sense), to possess it.

I have hitherto pointed my observations chiefly at the appearance of our ladies to the world, which, besides its being more immediately the object of public censorship, a variety of strictures lately sent me by my Correspondents naturally led me to consider. I am afraid, however, the same innovation begins to appear in our domestic as in our public life, and that the case of my friend Mr. *Homespun* is far from being singular. Some of those whose rank and station are such as to enforce example, and regulate opinion, think it an honourable distinction to be able to lead, from the sober track which the maxims of their mothers and grandmothers had marked out for them, such young ladies as chance, relationship, or neighbourhood, has placed within the reach of their influence. The state of diffidence and dependence, in which a young woman used to find herself happy under the protection of her parents or guardians, they teach their pupils to consider as incompatible with sense or spirit. With them obedience and subordination are terms of contempt; even the natural restraints of time are disregarded; childhood is immaturely forced into youth, and youth assumes the confidence and self-government of age; domestic duties are held to be slavish, and domestic enjoyments insipid.

There is an appearance of brilliancy in the pleasures of high life and fashion, which naturally daz-

zles and seduces the young and inexperienced. But let them not believe that the scale of fortune is the standard of happiness, or the whirl of pleasure, which their patronesses describe, productive of the satisfaction which they affect to enjoy in it. Could they trace its course through a month, a week, or a day, of that life which they enjoy, they would find it commonly expire in languor, or end in disappointment. They would see the daughters of fashion in a state the most painful of any, obliged to cover hatred with the smile of friendship, and anguish with the appearance of gaiety; they would see the mistress of the feast, or the directress of the route, at the table, or in the drawing-room, in the very scene of her pride, torn with those jarring passions which —— but I will not talk like a moralist——which make dutchesses mean, and the finest women in the world ugly. I do them no injustice: for I state this at the time of *possession*; its value in *reflection* I forbear to estimate.

If I dared to contrast this with a picture of domestic pleasure; were I to exhibit a family virtuous and happy, where affection takes place of duty, and obedience is enjoyed, not exacted; where the happiness of every individual is reflected upon the society, and a certain tender solicitude about each other, gives a more delicate sense of pleasure than any enjoyment merely selfish can produce; could I paint them in their little circles of business or of amusement, of sentiment or of gaiety, I am persuaded the scene would be too venerable for the most irreverent to deride, and its happiness too apparent for the most dissipated to deny. Yet to be the child or mother of such a family, is often foregone for the miserable vanity of aping some woman, weak as she is worthless, despised in the midst of flattery, and wretched in the very centre of dissipation.

I have limited this remonstrance to motives merely *temporal*, because I am informed, some of our high-bred females deny the reality of any other. This refinement of infidelity is one of those new acquirements, which, till of late, were altogether unknown to the ladies of this country, and which I hope very, very few of them are yet possessed of. I mean not to dispute the solidity of their system, as I am persuaded they have studied the subject deeply, and under very able and learned masters. I would only take the liberty of hinting the purpose for which, I have been told by some fashionable men, such doctrines have frequently been taught. It seems, it is understood by the younger class of our philosophers, that a woman never thinks herself quite *alone*, till she has put *God* out of the way, as well as her *husband*.

V.

N° 31. TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1779.

Fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum.

VIRG.

THERE is hardly any species of writing more difficult than that of drawing characters; and hence it is that so few authors have excelled in it. Among those writers who have confined themselves merely to this sort of composition, *Theophrastus* holds the first place among the ancients, and *La Bruyere* among the moderns. But, besides those who have professedly confined themselves to the delineation of cha-

racter, every historian who relates events, and who describes the disposition and qualities of the persons engaged in them, is to be considered as a writer of characters.

There are two methods by which a character may be delineated; and different authors have, more or less, adopted the one or the other. A character may either be given by describing the internal feelings of the mind, and by relating the qualities with which the person is endowed; or, without mentioning in general the internal qualities which he possesses, an account may be given of his external conduct, of his behaviour on this or that occasion, and how he was affected by this or that event.

An author who draws characters in the first manner, employs those words that denote the general qualities of the mind; and by means of these he gives a description and view of the character. He passes over the particular circumstances of behaviour and conduct which lead to the general conclusion with regard to the character, and gives the conclusion itself.

But an author who draws characters in the other manner above alluded to, instead of giving the general conclusion deduced from the observation of particular circumstances of conduct, gives a view of the particulars themselves, and of the external conduct of the person whose character he wishes to represent, leaving his readers to form their own conclusion from that view which he has given. Of the two authors I have mentioned, each excels in one of those opposite manners. In every instance I can recollect, excepting the extravagant picture of the *absent man*, *La Bruyere* lays before his readers the internal feelings of the character he wishes to represent; while *Theophrastus* gives the action which the internal feelings produce.

Of these different modes of delineating characters, each has its peculiar advantages. The best method of giving a full and comprehensive view of the different parts of a character, may be by a general enumeration of the qualities of mind with which the person is endowed: while, at the same time, it is, perhaps, impossible to mark the nice and delicate shades of character, without bringing the image more fully before the eye, and placing the person in that situation which calls him forth into action.

In these two different manners, there are faults into which authors, following the one or the other, are apt to fall, and which they should studiously endeavour to avoid. An author who gives the internal qualities of the character, should guard against being too general; he who gives views of the conduct, and represents the actions themselves, should avoid being too particular. When the internal qualities of the mind are described, they may be expressed in such vague and general terms, as to lay before the reader no marked distinguishing feature; when, again, in the views which are given of the conduct, the detail is too particular, the author is apt to tire by becoming tedious, or to disgust by being trifling or familiar, or by approaching to vulgarity. Some of our most celebrated historians have committed errors of the first sort; when, at the end of a reign, or at the exit of a hero, they draw the character of the King, or great man, and tell their readers, that the person they are taking leave of, was *brave*, *generous*, *just*, *humane*; or the tyrant they have been declaiming against, was *cruel*, *haughty*, *jealous*, *deceitful*; these general qualities are so little distinguishing, that they may be applied, almost, to any very good, or very bad man, in the history. When, on the other hand, an author, in order to give a particular view of the person of whom he writes, tells his readers, what

such person did before, and what after dinner; what before, and what after he slept; if his vivacity prevent him from appearing tedious, he will at least be in danger of displeasing by the appearance of vulgarity or affectation.

It may be proper here to observe, that, in making a right choice of the different manners in which a character may be drawn, much depends upon the subject, or design of the author; one method may be more suited to one kind of composition than to another. Thus the author who confines himself merely to drawing characters, the historian who draws a character arising only from, or illustrating the events he records, or the novellist who delineates characters by feigned circumstances and situations, have each their several objects, and different manners may be properly adopted by each of them. Writers, such as *Theophrastus* and *La Bruyere*, take for their object a character governed by some one passion, absorbing all others, and influencing the man in every thing; *the miser*, *the epicure*, *the drunkard*, *&c.* The business of the historian is more difficult and more extensive; he takes the complicated characters in real life; he must give a view of every distinguishing characteristic of the personage, the good and the bad, the fierce and the gentle, all the strange diversities which life presents.

Novel-writers ought, like the professed writers of character, to have it generally in view to illustrate some one distinguishing feature or passion of the mind; but then they have it in their power, by the assistance of story, and by inventing circumstances and situation, to exhibit its leading features in every possible point of view. The great error, indeed, into which novel-writers commonly fall, is, that they attend more to the story and to the circumstances they relate, than to giving new and just views of the

character of the person they present. Their general method is to affix names to certain personages, whom they introduce to their readers, whom they lead through dangers and distresses, or exhibit in circumstances of ridicule, without having it in view to illustrate any one predominant or leading principle of the human heart; without making their readers one bit better acquainted with the characteristic features of those persons at the end of the story than at the beginning. Hence there are so few novels which give lasting pleasure, or can bear to be perused oftener than once. From the surprise occasioned by the novelty or nature of the events, they may carry their readers once through them; but, as they do not illustrate any of the principles of the mind, or give any interesting views of character, they raise no desire for a second perusal, and ever after lie neglected on the shelf.

How very different from these are the novels, which, in place of relying upon the mere force of incident, bring the characters of their personages fully before us, paint all their shades and attitudes, and by making us, as it were, intimately acquainted with them, deeply engage our hearts in every circumstance which can affect them? This happy talent of delineating all the delicate features and nice tints of human character, never fails to delight, and will often atone for many defects. It is this which renders *Richardson* so interesting, in spite of his immeasurable tediousness; it is this which will render *Fielding* ever delightful, notwithstanding the indelicate coarseness with which he often offends us.

A

N° 32. SATURDAY, MAY 15, 1779.

HAPPINESS has been compared, by one of my predecessors, to a *Game;* and he has prescribed certain rules to be followed by the players. These, indeed, are more necessary than one might suppose at first sight; this game, like most others, being as often lost by *bad play* as by *ill luck*. The circumstances I am placed in, some of which I communicated to my readers in my introductory paper, make me often a sort of looker-on at this game; and, like all lookers-on, I think I discover blunders in the play of my neighbours, who frequently lose the advantages their fortune lays open to them.

To chase the allusion a little farther, it is seldom that opportunities occur of *brilliant strokes* or *deep calculation*. With most of us, the ordinary little stake is all that is played for; and he who goes on observing the common rules of the game, and keeping his temper in the reverses of it, will find himself a gainer at last. In plainer language, *happiness*, with the bulk of men, may be said to consist in the power of enjoying the ordinary pleasures of life, and in not being too easily hurt by the little disquietudes of it. There is a certain fineness of soul, and delicacy of sentiment, with which few situations accord, to which many seeming harmless ones give the greatest uneasiness. The art '*desipere in loco*' (by which I understand being able not only to trifle, upon occasion, ourselves, but also to bear the foolery of others),

is a qualification extremely useful for smoothing a man's way through the world.

I have been led into this train of thinking, by some circumstances in a visit I had lately the pleasure of receiving from my friend Mr. *Umphraville*, with whom I made my readers acquainted in some former Numbers. A particular piece of business occurred, which made it expedient for him to come to town; and though he was, at first, extremely averse from the journey, having never liked great towns, and now relishing them less than ever, yet the remonstrances of his man of business, aided by very urgent requests from me, at length overcame him. He set out, therefore, attended by his old family-servant, *John*, whom I had not failed to remember in my invitation to his master.

At the first stage on the road, *John* told me, his master looked sad, eat little, and spoke less. Though the landlord ushered-in dinner in person, and gave his guest a very minute description of his manner of *feeding his mutton*, Mr. *Umphraville* remained a hearer only, and shewed no inclination to have him sit down and partake of his own dishes; and, though he desired him, indeed, to taste the wine, of which he brought in a bottle after dinner, he told him, at the same time, to let the ostler know he should want his horses as soon as possible. The landlord left the room, and told *John*, who was eating his dinner, somewhat more deliberately, in the kitchen, that his master seemed a melancholy kind of a gentleman, not half so good-humoured as his neighbour Mr. *Jolly*.

John, who is interested both in the happiness and honour of his master, endeavoured to mend matters in the evening, by introducing the *hostess* very particularly to Mr. *Umphraville*; and, indeed, venturing to invite her to sup with him. *Umphraville* was too

shy, or too civil, to decline the lady's company, and *John* valued himself on having procured him so agreeable a companion.—His master complained to me, since he came to town, of the oppression of this landlady's company; and declared his resolution of not stopping at the *George* on his way home.

The morning after his arrival at my house, while we were sitting together, talking of old stories, and old friends, with all the finer feelings afloat about us, *John* entered, with a look of much satisfaction, announcing the name of Mr. *Bearskin*. This gentleman is a first cousin of *Umphraville*'s, who resides in town, and whom he had not seen these six years. He was bred a *mercer*, but afterwards extended his dealings with his capital, and has been concerned in several great mercantile transactions. While *Umphraville*, with all his genius, and all his accomplishments, was barely preserving his estate from ruin at home, this man, by dint of industry and application, and partly from the want of genius and accomplishments, has amassed a fortune greater than the richest of his cousin's ancestors was ever possessed of. He holds *Umphraville* in some respect, however, as the representative of his mother's family, from which he derives all his gentility, his father having sprung nobody knows whence, and lived nobody knows how, till he appeared behind the counter of a woollen-draper, to whose shop and business he succeeded.

My friend, though he could have excused his visit at this time, received him with politeness. He introduced him to me as his near relation; on which the other, who mixes the flippant civility of his former profession with somewhat of the monied confidence of his present one, made me a handsome compliment, and congratulated Mr. *Umphraville* on the possession of such a friend. He concluded, however, with a distant insinuation of *his* house's being

a more natural home for his *cousin* when in town, than that of any other person. This led to a description of that house, its rooms and its furniture, in which he made no inconsiderable eulogium on his own taste, the taste of his wife, and the taste of the times. *Umphraville* blushed, bit his lips, complained of the heat of the room, changed his seat, in short suffered torture all the way from the *cellar* to the *garret*.

Mr. *Bearskin* closed this description of his house with an expression of his and his wife's earnest desire to see their *cousin* there. *Umphraville* declared his intention of calling to inquire after Mrs. *Bearskin* and the young folks, mentioning, at the same time, the shortness of his proposed stay in town, and the hurry his business would necessarily keep him in while he remained. But this declaration by no means satisfied his kinsman; he insisted on his spending a day with them so warmly, that the other was at last overcome, and the third day after was fixed on for that purpose, which Mr. *Bearskin* informed us would be the more agreeable to all parties, as he should then have an opportunity of introducing us to his *London* correspondent, a man of great fortune, who had just arrived here on a jaunt to see the country, and had promised him the favour of eating a bit of mutton with him on that day. I would have excused myself from being of the party; but not having, any more than *Umphraville*, a talent at refusal, was, like him, over-powered by the solicitations of his cousin.

The history of that dinner I may possibly give my readers hereafter, in a separate paper, a dinner, now-a-days, being a matter of consequence, and not to be managed in an *episode*. The time between was devoted by Mr. *Umphraville* to business, in which he was pleased commonly to ask my advice, and to communicate his opinions. The last I found generally

unfavourable both of men and things; my friend carries the '*prisca fides*' too much about with him to be perfectly pleased in his dealings with people of business. When we returned home in the evening, he seemed to feel a relief in having got out the reach of the world, and muttered expressions, not to mention the inflections of his countenance, which, if fairly set down on paper, would almost amount to calling his *banker* a Jew, his *lawyer* not a gentleman, and his *agent* a pettifogger. He was, however, very ready to clap up a truce with his ideas when in company with these several personages; and though he thought he saw them taking advantages, of which I am persuaded they were perfectly innocent, he was contented to turn his face another way, and pass on. A man of *Umphraville*'s disposition is willing to suffer all the penalties of silliness, but that of being thought silly.

I

N° 33. TUESDAY, MAY 18, 1779.

Among the many advantages arising from cultivated sentiment, one of the first and most truly valuable, is that delicate complacency of mind which leads us to consult the feelings of those with whom we live, by shewing a disposition to gratify them as far as in our power, and by avoiding whatever has a contrary tendency.

They must indeed, have attended little to what passes in the world, who do not know the importance of this disposition; who have not observed,

that the want of it often poisons the domestic happiness of families, whose felicity every other circumstance concurs to promote.

Among the letters lately received from my Correspondents, are two, which, as they afford a lively picture of the bad consequences resulting from the neglect of this complacency, I shall here lay before my readers. The first is from a lady, who writes as follows:

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

MY father was a merchant of some eminence, who gave me a good education, and a fortune of several thousand pounds. With these advantages, a tolerable person, and I think not an unamiable temper, I was not long arrived at womanhood before I found myself possessed of many admirers. Among others was Mr. *Gold*, a gentleman of a very respectable character, who had some connections in trade with my father: to him, being a young man of good figure, and of very open and obliging manners, I soon gave the preference, and we were accordingly married with the universal approbation of my friends.

We have now lived together above three years, and I have brought him two boys and a girl, all very fine children. I go little abroad, attend to nothing so much as the œconomy of our family, am as obliging as possible to all my husband's friends, and study in every particular to be a kind and dutiful wife. Mr. *Gold*'s reputation and success in business daily increase, and he is, in the main, a kind and attentive husband; yet I find him so particular in his temper, and so often out of humour about trifles, that in spite of all those comfortable circumstances, I am perfectly unhappy.

At one time he finds fault with the dishes at table; at another, with the choice of my maid-servants; sometimes he is displeased with the trimming of my gown, sometimes with the shape of my cloak, or the figure of my head-dress; and should I chance to give an opinion on any subject which is not perfectly to his mind, he probably looks out of humour at the time, and he is sure to chide me about it when we are by ourselves.

It is of no consequence whether I have been right or wrong in any of those particulars. If I say a word in defence of my choice or opinion, it is sure to make matters worse, and I am only called a fool for my pains; or, if I express my wonder that he should give himself uneasiness about such trifles, he answers sullenly, that, to be sure, every thing is a *trifle* in which I choose to disoblige him.

It was but the other day, as we were just going out to dine at a friend's house, he told me my *gown* was extremely ugly. I answered, his observation surprised me, for it was *garnet*, and I had taken it off on hearing him say he wondered I never chose one of that colour. Upon this he got into a passion, said it was very odd I should charge my bad taste upon him; he had never made any such observation, for the colour was his aversion. The dispute at last grew so warm, that I threw myself down on a settee, unable to continue it, while he flung out of the room, ordered away the coach from the door, and wrote an apology to his friend for our not waiting upon him.

We dined in our different apartments: and though, I believe, we were equally sorry for what had passed, and Mr. *Gold*, when we met at supper, asked my pardon for having contradicted me so roughly; yet we had not sat half an hour together, when he told me, that, after all, I was certainly mistaken, in

saying he had recommended a *garnet colour;* and, when I very coolly assured him I was not, he renewed the dispute with as much keenness as ever. We parted in the same bad humour we had done before dinner, and I have hardly had a pleasant look from him since.

In a word, Mr. *Gold* will allow me to have no mind but his; and, unless I can see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and taste with his palate (none of which I can very easily bring myself to do, as you must know all of them are somewhat particular), I see no prospect of our situation changing for the better; and what makes our present one doubly provoking is, that, but for this unfortunate weakness, Mr. *Gold*, who is in other respects, a very worthy man, would make one of the best of husbands.

Pray tell me, Sir, what I should do in this situation, or take your own way of letting my husband see his weakness, the reformation of which would be the greatest of all earthly blessings to

Yours, &c.

SUSANNA GOLD.

I was thinking how I should answer this letter, or in what way I could be useful to my Correspondent, when I received the following, the insertion of which is, I believe, the best reply I can make to it.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

I WAS bred a merchant; by my success in trade I am now in affluent circumstances, and I have reason to think that I am so with an unblemished character.

Some years ago, I married the daughter of a respectable citizen, who brought a comfortable addition to my fortune; and, as she had been virtuously educated, and seemed chearful and good tempered, as I was myself naturally of a domestic turn, and resolved to make a good husband, I thought we bade fair for being happy in each other.

But, though I must do my spouse the justice to say, that she is discreet and prudent, attentive to the affairs of her family, a careful and fond mother to her children, and, in many respects, an affectionate and dutiful wife; yet one foible in her temper destroys the effect of all these good qualities. She is so much attached to her own opinions in every trifle, so impatient of contradiction in them, and withal so ready to dispute mine, that, if I disapprove of her taste or sentiments, in any one particular, or seem dissatisfied, when she disapproves of my taste or sentiments, it is the certain source of a quarrel; and, while we perfectly agree as to our general plan of life, and every essential circumstance of our domestic œconomy, this silly fancy, that I must eat, dress, think, and speak, precisely as she would have me, while she will not accommodate herself to me in the most trifling of these particulars, gives me perpetual uneasiness; and with almost every thing I could wish, a genteel income, a good reputation, promising children, and a virtuous wife, whom I sincerely esteem, I have the mortification to find myself absolutely unhappy.

I am sure this foible of my poor wife's will appear to you, Mr. Mirror, in its proper light; your making it appear so to her, may be the means of alleviating our mutual distress; for, to tell you the truth, I believe she is almost as great a sufferer as I am. I hope you will gratify me in this desire;

by doing so you may be of general service, and will particularly oblige

Your constant reader, and
Obedient humble servant,
NATHANIEL GOLD.

On comparing these two letters it is evident that, from the want of that *complacency* mentioned in the beginning of this paper, the very sensibility of temper, and strength of affection, which, under its influence, would have made this good couple happy, has had a quite contrary effect. The source of the disquiet they complain of, is nothing else than the want of that respect for the taste, feelings, and opinions of each other, which constitutes the disposition I have recommended above, and which, so far from being inconsistent with a reasonable desire of reforming each other in these particulars, is the most probable means of accomplishing it.

Nor is the case of Mr. and Mrs. *Gold* singular in this respect. By much the greatest part of domestic quarrels originate from the want of this pliancy of disposition, which people seem, very absurdly, to suppose may be dispensed with in trifles. I have known a man who would have parted with half his estate to serve a friend, to whom he would not have yielded a hair's breadth in an argument. But the lesser virtues must be attended to as well as the greater; the manners as well as the duties of life. They form a sort of *Pocket Coin*, which, though it does not enter into great and important transactions, is absolutely necessary for common and ordinary intercourse.

N° 34. SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1779.

In compliance with a promise I made my readers at the close of last *Saturday*'s paper (at least it was that sort of promise which a man keeps when the thing suits his inclination), I proceed to give them an account of that dinner to which my friend Mr. *Umphraville* and I were invited by his cousin Mr. *Bearskin*.

On our way to the house, I perceived certain symptoms of dissatisfaction, which my friend could not help bringing forth, though he durst not impute them to the right cause, as I have heard of men beating their wives at home, to revenge themselves for the crosses they have met with abroad. He complained of the moistness of the weather, and the dirtiness of the street; was quite fatigued with the length of the way (Mr *Bearskin*'s house being fashionably eccentric), and almost cursed the taylor for the tightness of a suit of clothes, which he had bespoke on his arrival in town, and had now put on for the first time. His chagrin, I believe, was increased by his having just learned from his lawyer, that the business he came to town about, could not be finished at the time he expected, but would probably last a week longer.

When we entered Mr. *Bearskin*'s drawing-room, we found his wife sitting with her three daughters ready to receive us. It was easy to see, by the air of the lady, that she was perfectly mistress of the house, and that her husband was only a secondary

person there. He seemed, however, contented with his situation, and an admirer of his wife; a sort of lap-dog husband (of whom I have seen many), who looks sleek, runs about briskly, and, though he now and then gets a kick from his mistress, is as ready to play over his tricks again as ever.

Mr. *Bearskin*, after many expressions of his happiness in seeing his cousin in his new house, proposed walking us down stairs again, to begin shewing it from the ground-story upwards. *Umphraville*, though I saw him sweating at the idea, was ready to follow his conductor, when we were saved by the interposition of the lady, who uttered a 'Psha! Mr. *Bearskin*,' with so significant a look, that her husband instantly dropped his design, saying, 'to be sure there was not much worth seeing, 'though he could have wished to have shown his 'cousin his *study*, which he thought was tolerably 'clever.'—'I thought, Papa,' said the eldest of the Misses, 'it was not quite in order yet.'—'Why, 'not altogether;' replied her father: 'I have not 'been able to get up my heads, as *Pope* has lost an 'ear, and *Homer* the left side of his beard, by the 'carelessness of a packer; and I want about three 'feet and a half of folios of my lowest shelf.'—'I 'don't care if there was not a *folio* in the world,' rejoined Miss. 'Child!' said her mother in a tone of rebuke—Miss bridled up, and was silent;—I smiled;—*Umphraville* walked to the window, and wiped his forehead.

Bearskin now pulled out his watch, and, telling the hour, said, he wondered his friend Mr. *Blubber* was not come, as he was generally punctual to a minute. While he spoke, a loud rap at the door announced the expected company; and presently Mr, *Blubber*, his wife, a son, and two daughters, entered the room. The first had on an old-fashioned *pompadour*

coat, with gold buttons, and very voluminous sleeves, his head adorned by a large *major* wig, with curls as white and as stiff as if they had been cast in *plaster of Paris*; but the females, and heir of the family, were dressed in the very height of the mode. *Bearskin* introduced the old gentleman to his cousin Mr. *Umphraville*:—'Mr. *Blubber*, Sir, a very particular 'friend of mine, and (turning to me with a whisper) 'worth fourscore thousand pounds, if he's worth a 'farthing.' *Blubber* said, he feared they had kept us waiting; but that his wife and daughters had got under the hands of the hair-dresser, and he verily thought would never have done with him. The ladies were too busy to reply to this accusation; they had got into a committee of inquiry on Mr. *Edward Blubber*'s waistcoat, which had been *tamboured*, it seems, by his sisters, and was universally declared to be *monstrous handsome*. The young man himself seemed to be highly delighted with the reflection of it in a mirror that stood opposite to him. 'Isn't it vastly pretty, Sir?' said one of the young ladies to *Umphraville*. 'Ma'am!' said he, starting from a reverie, in which I saw, by his countenance, he was meditating on the young gentleman and his waistcoat in no very favourable manner. ——I read her countenance too; she thought *Umphraville* just the fool he did her brother.

Dinner was now announced, and the company, after some ceremonial, got into their places at table, in the centre of which stood a sumptuous *épargne*, filled, as *Bearskin* informed us, with the produce of his *farm*. This joke, which, I suppose, was as regular as the grace before dinner, was explained to the ignorant to mean, that the sweetmeats came from a plantation in one of the *West-India* islands, in which he had a concern. The *épargne* itself now produced another dissertation from the ladies, and,

like the waistcoat, was also pronounced *monstrous handsome*. *Blubber*, taking his eye half off a plate of salmon, to which he had just been helped, observed, that it would come to a handsome price too; — 'Sixty ounces, I'll warrant it,' said he; 'but as the 'plate tax is now repealed, it will cost but the in-'terest a-keeping.' — 'La, Papa,' said Miss *Blubber*, 'you are always thinking of the money things cost?' '—Yes,' added her brother, 'Tables of interest are an 'excellent accompaniment for a *dessert*.' — At this speech all the ladies laughed very loud. *Blubber* said, he was an impudent dog; but seemed to relish his son's wit notwithstanding. *Umphraville* looked sternly at him; and, had not a glance at his *waistcoat* set him down as something beneath a man's anger, I don't know what consequences might have followed. During the rest of the entertainment, I could see the *fumet* of fool and coxcomb on every morsel that *Umphraville* swallowed, though Mrs. *Bearskin*, next whom he sat, was at great pains to help him to the nice bits of every thing within her reach.

When dinner was over, Mr. *Blubber* mentioned his design of making a tour through the *Highlands*, to visit *Stirling*, *Taymouth*, and *Dunkeld*; and applying to our landlord for some description of these places, was by him referred to Mr. *Umphraville* and me. Mr. *Umphraville* was not in a communicative mood; so I was obliged to assure Mr. *Blubber*, who talked with much uncertainty and apprehension of these matters, that he would find *beds* and *bed-clothes*, *meat* for himself, and *corn* for his horses, at the several places above mentioned; that he had no *dangerous seas* to cross in getting at them; and that there were no *highwaymen* upon the road.

After this there was a considerable interval of silence, and we were in danger of getting once more

upon Mr. *Edward*'s fine waistcoat, when Mr. *Bearskin*, informing the company that his cousin was a great lover of music, called on his daughter, Miss *Polly*, for a *song*, with which, after some of the usual apologies, she complied; and in compliment to Mr. *Umphraville*'s taste, who she was sure must like *Italian* music, she sung, or rather *squalled*, a song of *Sacchini*'s, in which there was scarcely one bar in tune from beginning to end. Miss *Blubber* said, in her usual phraseology, that is was *a monstrous sweet* air.—Her brother swore it was *divinely sung*. ——*Umphraville* gulped down a falsehood with a very bad grace, and said, Miss would be a good singer with a little more practice.—A compliment which was not more distant from truth on one side, than from Miss's expectations on the other, and I could plainly perceive, did not set him forward in the favour of the family.

'My father is a judge of singing too,' said Mr. *Edward Blubber*; 'what is your opinion of the song, 'Sir?'—'My opinion is,' said he, 'that your *Italia-* 'nos always set me asleep; English ears should have 'English songs, I think.'—'Then, suppose one of 'the ladies should give us an English song,' said I. '*'Tis a good motion,'* said Mr. *Bearskin*, I second 'it; Miss *Betsy Blubber* sings an excellent English 'song.'—Miss *Betsy* denied stoutly that she ever sung at all; but evidence being produced against her, she, at last, said she would try if she could make out '*The Maid's Choice.*' 'Ay, ay, *Betsy*,' said her father, 'a very good song; I have heard it 'before.

——'If I could but find,
'I care not for fortune—Umh!—a man to my mind.'

Miss *Betsy* began the song accordingly, and to make

up for her want of *voice*, accompanied it with a great deal of *action*. Either from the accident of his being placed opposite to her, or from a sly application to his state as an *old bachelor*, she chose to personify the maid's choice in the figure of *Umphraville*, and pointed the description of the song particularly at him. *Umphraville*, with all his dignity, his abilities, and his knowledge, felt himself uneasy and ridiculous under the silly allusion of a ballad; he blushed, attempted to laugh, blushed again, and still looked with that awkward importance which only the more attracted the ridicule of the fools around him. Not long after the ladies retired; and no persuasion of his cousin could induce him to stay the evening, or even to enter the drawing-room where they were assembled at tea.

'Thank Heaven!' said *Umphraville*, when the door was shut, and we had got fairly into the street. 'Amen!' I replied, smiling, 'for our good dinner 'and excellent wine!'—'How the devil, Charles,' said he, 'do you contrive to bear all this nonsense 'with the composure you do?'—'Why, I have 'often told you, my friend, that our earth is not 'a planet fitted up only for the reception of wise 'men.—Your *Blubbers* and *Bearskins* are necessary 'parts of the system; they deserve the enjoyments 'they are capable of feeling;—and I am not sure 'if he who suffers from his own superiority does 'not deserve his sufferings.'

N° 35. TUESDAY, MAY 25, 1779.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

TILL I arrived at the age of twenty, my time was divided between my books, and the society of a few friends, whom a similarity of pursuits and dispositions recommended to me. About that period, finding that the habits of reserve and retirement had acquired a power over me, which my situation, as heir to a considerable fortune, would render inconvenient, I was prevailed upon, partly by a sense of this, partly by the importunity of my relations, to make an effort for acquiring a more general acquaintance, and fashionable deportment. As I was conscious of an inclination to oblige, and a quick sense of propriety, two qualities which I esteemed the ground of good-breeding; as my wit was tolerably ready, and my figure not disadvantageous, I owe to you that I entertained some hopes of success.

I was, however, unsuccessful. The novelty of the scenes in which I found myself engaged, the multiplicity of observances and attention requisite upon points which I had always regarded as below my notice, embarrassed and confounded me. The feelings to which I had trusted for my direction, served only to make me awkward, and fearful of offending. My obsequious services in the drawing-room passed unrewarded; and my observations, when I ventured to mingle, either in the chat of the women, or the politics of the men, being de-

livered with timidity and hesitation, were overlooked or neglected. Some of the more elderly and discreet among the former seemed to pity me; and I could not help remarking, that they often, as if they had meant the hint for me, talked of the advantage to be derived from the perusal of Lord *Chesterfield's Letters*. To this author, then, as soon as I learned his subject, I had recourse, as to a guide that would point out my way, and support me in my journey. But, how much was I astonished, when, through a veil of wit, ridicule, elegant expression, and lively illustration, I discerned a studied system of frivolity, meanness, flattery, and dissimulation, inculcated as the surest and most eligible road to eminence and popularity?

Young as I am, Mr. MIRROR, and heedless as I may consequently be supposed, I cannot think that this work is a code proper for being held up to us as the regulator of our conduct. The talents insisted on with peculiar emphasis, the accomplishments most earnestly recommended, are such as, in our days, if they ought to be treated of at all, should be mentioned only to put us on our guard against them. If riches naturally tend to render trifles of importance; if they direct our attention too much toward exterior accomplishments; if they propagate the courtly and complying spirit too extensively at any rate, we certainly, in this country, so wealthy and luxurious, have no need of exhortations to cultivate or acquire those qualifications. The habits that may arrest for a little time the progress of this corruption, ought now to be insisted on. Independence, fortitude, stubborn integrity, and pride that disdains the shadow of servility; these are the virtues which a tutor should inculcate, these the blessings which a fond father should supplicate from Heaven for his offspring.

It is, throughout, the error of his Lordship's system, to consider talents and accomplishments according to the use that may be made of them, rather than their intrinsic worth. In this catechism, *applause* is *rectitude*, and *success* is *morality*. That, in our days, a person may rise to eminence by trivial accomplishments, and become popular by flattery and dissimulation, may, perhaps, be true. But from this it surely does not follow, that these are the means which an honourable character should employ. There is a dignity in the mind which cultivates those arts alone that are valuable, which courts those characters alone that are worthy, which disdains to conceal its own sentiments, or minister to the foibles of others; there is, I say, a conscious dignity and satisfaction in these feelings, which neither applause, nor power, nor popularity, without them, can ever bestow.

Many of his Lordship's distinctions are too nice for my faculties. I cannot, for my part, discern the difference between feigned confidence and insincerity; between the conduct that conveys the approbation of a sentiment, or the flattery of a foible, and the words that declare it. I should think the man whose countenance was open, and his thoughts concealed, a hypocrite; I should term him who could treat his friends as if they were at the same time to be his enemies, a monster of ingratitude and duplicity. It is dangerous to trifle thus upon the *borders of virtue*. By teaching us that it may insensibly be blended with vice, that their respective limits are not in every case evident and certain, our veneration for it is diminished. Its chief safeguard is a jealous sensibility, that startles at the colour or shadow of deceit. When this barrier has been insulted, can any other be opposed at which conscience

will arise and proclaim, Thus far, and no farther, shalt thou advance?

The love of general applause, recommended by his Lordship, as the great principle of conduct, is a folly and a weakness. He that directs himself by this compass cannot hope to steer through life with steadiness and consistency. He must surrender his own character, and assume the hue of every company he enters. To court the approbation of any one, is, in a tacit manner, to do homage to his judgment or his feelings. He that extends his courtship of it beyond the praise-worthy, violates the exclusive privilege of virtue, and must seek it by unworthy arts.

On the other hand, though I am by no means a friend to rash and unguarded censure, yet I cannot help considering the conduct of him who will censure nothing, who will speak his sentiments of no character with freedom, who palliates every error, and apologizes for every failing, as more nearly allied to meanness, timidity, and a time-serving temper, than it is connected with candour, or favourable to the cause of virtue.

Nor can I persuade myself that his Lordship's system will be attended with general success. The real character is the only one than can be maintained at all times, and in all dispositions. Professions of friendship and regard will lead to expectations of service that cannot be answered. The sentiments delivered in one company, the manners assumed upon one occasion, will be remembered, and contrasted with those that are presented on another. Suspicion, once awakened, will penetrate the darkest cloud which art can throw around a person in the common intercourse of life.

Let us consider, too, were this system generally adopted, what a dull insipid scene must society

become! No distinction, no natural expression of character; no confidence of professions of any kind; no assurance of sincerity; no secret sympathy, nor delightful correspondence of feeling. All the sallies of wit, all the graces of polite manners, would but ill supply the want of these pleasures, the purest and most elegant which human life affords.

EUGENIUS.

To the AUTHOR of the MIRROR.

SIR,

As you treat much of politeness, I wish you would take notice of a particular sort of incivility from which one suffers, without being thought entitled to complain. I mean that of never contradicting one at all.

I have lately come from my father's in the country, where I was reckoned a girl of tolerable parts, to reside for some time at my aunt's in town. Here is a visitor, Mr. *Dapperwit*, a good-looking young man, with white teeth, a fine complexion, his cheeks dimpled, and rather a little full and large at bottom; in short, the civilest, most complying sort of face you can imagine. As I have often taken notice of his behaviour, I was resolved to minute down his discourse the other evening at tea. The conversation began about the *weather*, my aunt observing, that the seasons were wonderfully altered in her memory. 'Certainly, my lady,' said Mr *Dapperwit*, 'amazingly altered indeed.' 'Now I have heard 'my father say (said I), that is a vulgar error; 'for that it appears from registers kept for the 'purpose, that the state of the weather, though it 'may be different in certain seasons, months, or

'weeks, preserves a wonderful equilibrium in ge-
'neral.' 'Why to be sure, Miss, I believe, in gene-
'ral, as you say; —but, talking of the weather, I
'hope your Ladyship caught no cold at the play
't'other night; we were so awkwardly situated in
'getting out.'—'Not in the least, Sir; I was greatly
'obliged to your services there.'—'You were well
'entertained, I hope my Lady!'—'Very well, in-
'deed; I laughed exceedingly; there is a great deal
'of wit in *Shakspeare*'s comedies; 'tis pity there is
'so much of *low life* in them.'—'Your Ladyship's
'criticism is extremely just; every body must be
'struck with it.—'Why now I think (said I again)
'that what you call *low life*, is *nature*, which I
'would not lose for all the rest of the play.'—'Oh!
'doubtless, Miss; for *nature Shakspeare* is inimi-
'table, every body must allow that.'—'What do
'you think, Sir (said my cousin Betsy, who is a
'piece of a poetess herself), of that *monody* you
'were so kind as to send us yesterday?'—'I never
'deliver my opinion, Ma'am, before so able a judge,
'till I am first informed of hers.'—'I think it
'the most beautiful poem, Sir, I have read of a
'great while.'—'Your opinion, Ma'am, flatters me
'extremely, as it agrees exactly with my own;
'they are, I think, incontestably the sweetest lines'
'— Sweet they may be (here I broke in): I al-
'low them merit in the *versification*; but that is only
'one, and with me, by no means the chief requisite
'in a poem; they want *force* altogether.' 'Nay,
'as to the matter of *force*, indeed, it must be
'owned'—'Yes, Sir, and *unity*, and *propriety*, and
'a thousand other things; but, if my cousin
'will be kind enough to fetch the poem from her
'dressing-room we will be judged by you, Mr.
'*Dapperwit*.'—'Pardon me, ladies, you would not
'have me be so rude.

'Who shall decide when doctors disagree?'

And, with that, he made one of the finest *bows* in the world.

If all this, Sir, proceed from silliness, we must pity the man and there's an end on't; if it arise from an idea of silliness in us, let such gentlemen as Mr. *Dapperwit* know, that they are very much mistaken. But if it be the effect of pure civility,—pray inform them, Mr. MIRROR, that it is the most provoking piece of rudeness they can possibly commit.

Yours, &c.

BRIDGET NETTLEWIT.

V

N° 36. SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1779.

Some mute inglorious Milton *here may rest.*

GRAY.

NOTHING has a greater tendency to elevate and affect the heart than the reflection upon those personages who have performed a distinguished part on the theatre of life, whose actions were attended with important consequences to the world around them, or whose writings have animated or instructed mankind. The thought that they are now no more, that their ashes are mingled with those of the meanest and most worthless, affords a subject of contemplation, which, however melancholy, the mind, in a moment of pensiveness, may feel a secret sort of delight to

indulge. 'Tell her,' says *Hamlet*, 'that she may 'paint an inch thick; yet to this she must come at 'last.'

When *Xerxes*, at the head of his numerous army, saw all his troops ranged in order before him, he burst into tears at the thought, that, in a short time, they would be sweeped from the face of the earth, and be removed to give place to those who would fill other armies, and rank under other generals.

Something of what *Xerxes* felt, from the consideration that those who then were, should cease to be, it is equally natural to feel from the reflection, that all who have formerly lived have ceased to live, and that nothing more remains than the memory of a very few who have left some memorial which keeps alive their names, and the fame with which those names are accompanied.

But serious as this reflection may be, it is not so deep as the thought, that even of those persons who were possessed of talents for distinguishing themselves in the world, for having their memories handed down from age to age, much the greater part it is likely, from hard necessity, or by some of the various fatal accidents of life, have been excluded from the possibility of exerting themselves, or of being useful either to those who lived in the same age, or to posterity. Poverty in many, and 'disastrous chance' in others, have 'chill'd the genial current of the 'soul,' and numbers have been cut off by premature death in the midst of project and ambition. How many have there been in the ages that are past, how many may exist at this very moment, who, with all the talents fitted to shine in the world, to guide or to instruct it, may by some secret misfortune, have had their minds depressed, or the fire of their genius extinguished!

I have been led into these reflections from the pe-

rusal of a small volume of poems which happens now to lie before me, which, though possessed of very considerable merit, and composed in this country, are, I believe, very little known. In a well-written preface the reader is told, That most of them are the production of *Michael Bruce:* that this *Michael Bruce* was born in a remote village in *Kinross-shire*, and descended from parents remarkable for nothing but the innocence and simplicity of their lives: that in the twenty-first year of his age, he was seized with a consumption, which put an end to his life.

Nothing, methinks, has more the power of awakening benevolence, than the consideration of genius thus depressed by situation, suffered to pine in obscurity, and sometimes, as in the case of this unfortunate young man, to perish, it may be, for want of those comforts and conveniencies which might have fostered a delicacy of frame or of mind, ill calculated to bear the hardships which poverty lays on both. For my own part, I never pass the place (a little hamlet skirted with a circle of old ash trees, about three miles on this side of *Kinross*) where *Michael Bruce* resided: I never look on his dwelling,—a small thatched house, distinguished from the cottages of the other inhabitants only by a *sashed window* at the end, instead of a *lattice*, fringed with a *honey-suckle* plant, which the poor youth had trained around it;—I never find myself in that spot, but I stop my horse involuntarily;—and looking on the window, which the honey-suckle has now almost covered, in the dream of the moment, I picture out a figure for the gentle tenant of the mansion; I wish, and my heart swells while I do so, that he were alive, and that I were a great man to have the luxury of visiting him there, and bidding him be happy. I cannot carry my readers thither; but, that they may share some of my feelings, I will present them

with an extract from the last poem in the little volume before me, which from its subject, and the manner in which it is written, cannot fail of touching the heart of every one who reads it.

A young man of genius, in a deep consumption, at the age of twenty-one, feeling himself every moment going faster to decline, is an object sufficiently interesting; but how much must every feeling on the occasion be heightened, when we know that this person possessed so much dignity and composure of mind, as not only to contemplate his approaching fate, but even to write a poem on the subject!

In the *French* language there is a much admired poem of the *Abbé de Chaulieu*, written in expectation of his own death, to the *Marquis la Farre*, lamenting his approaching separation from his friend. *Michael Bruce*, who, it is probable, never heard of the *Abbe de Chaulieu*, has also written a poem on his own approaching death; with the latter part of which I shall conclude this paper.

Now spring returns; but not to me returns
The vernal joy my better years have known:
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
And all the joys of life with health are flown.

Starting and shiv'ring in th' unconstant wind,
Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,
Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclin'd,
And count the silent moments as they pass.

The winged moments, whose unstaying speed
No art can stop, or in their course arrest;
Whose flight shall shortly count me with the dead,
And lay me down in peace with them that rest.

Oft morning dreams presage approaching fate;
And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true.
Led by pale ghosts, I enter death's dark gate,
And bid the realms of light and life adieu!

I hear the helpless wail, the shriek of woe;
I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,
The sluggish streams that slowly creep below,
Which mortals visit, and return no more.

Farewell, ye blooming fields! ye cheerful plains!
Enough for me the church-yard's lonely mound,
Where Melancholy with still Silence reigns,
And the rank grass waves o'er the cheerless ground.

There let me wander at the close of eve,
When sleep sits dewy on the labourer's eyes,
The world and all its busy follies leave,
And talk with wisdom where my DAPHNIS lies.

There let me sleep, forgotten, in the clay,
When death shall shut these weary aching eyes,
Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.

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